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THE MARTYR LAND:

OR

TALES OF THE VAUDOIS

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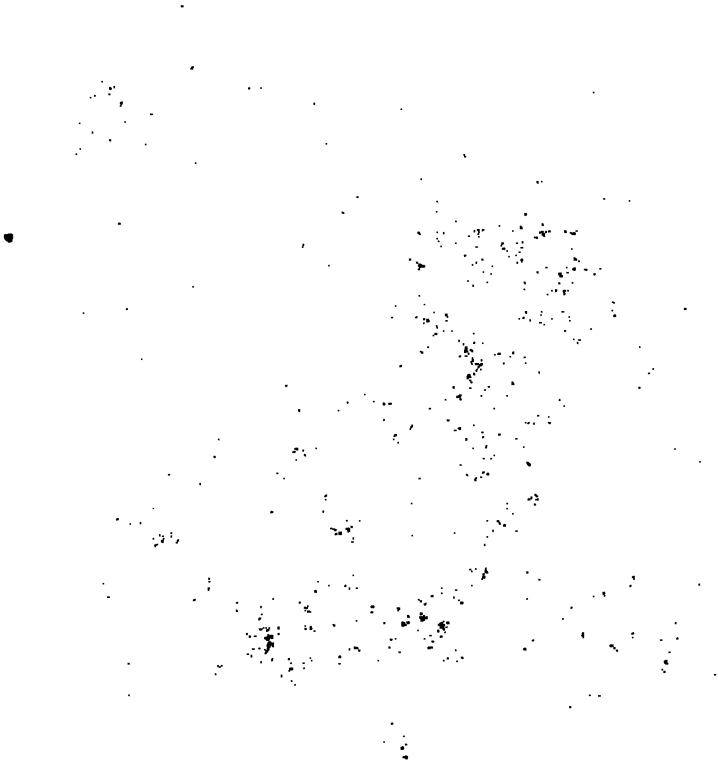

THE MARTYR LAND;

OR,

TALES OF THE VAUDOIS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"SUNLIGHT THROUGH THE MIST,"
AND
"THE MONASTERY AND THE MOUNTAIN CHURCH."

WITH

FRONTISPIECE BY JOHN GILBERT.

LONDON:
GRANT AND GRIFFITH,
(SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERY AND HARRIS,)
CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.
M.DCCC.LVI.

249. w. 212.

THE VAUDOIS REMOVING THEIR FAMILIES TO A PLACE OF REFUGE.
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L MALEVR LAND;

249. m. 212.

"Never mind, my love, come with me, we shall be in plenty of time."

"O yes, more than time;" said Arthur, as the little party found themselves assembled in the hall, before the travelling carriage, dusty and dirty, drove rapidly up to the door. But when the steps were let down, and Mrs. Grenville lifted a remarkably pretty and fashionably-dressed little girl from the carriage, Mary's glee was considerably abated; and instead of going forward to meet her little cousin, she hung shyly back, placing her hand within that of her mother, as if for protection from such a graceful apparition.

The first introductions were, however, soon over, and shyness was forgotten in the excitement of welcoming papa, and taking the little travellers to their respective rooms, where everything was to be shown them at once; whilst they were at the same time assured that there were to be no lessons for all the remainder of the week. It was to be all play and amusement, that there might be plenty of time for the children to become acquainted with each other.

And it was wonderful how much was accomplished during those few days; there was so much to hear and to tell on both sides, for nothing could be in stronger contrast with the life which Charles and Annie Perceval

had led hitherto, than that to which their cousins had been always accustomed.

Mr. Grenville was a man of large property, and of most domestic tastes, in which his wife very cordially sympathised: from choice, therefore, they passed the greater portion of the year at Mr. Grenville's estate in Devonshire, where they devoted themselves to the education of their children, and to caring for the welfare of their dependants. In these tranquil pursuits, years passed quickly by, until sickness in its worst form broke in upon the happy circle.

There had been a great deal of fever in the neighbourhood, and in spite of the utmost precautions, it had spread amongst all classes. At the Grange it was peculiarly fatal. A fine, noble-spirited boy, and a gentle little girl, were laid in the same week in one tomb; and though Arthur struggled through the complaint, yet it so undermined his constitution, that it was feared that a long time must elapse before he could again be strong.

These were heavy trials; but Mr. and Mrs. Grenville were Christians, not in name only, but in deed and in truth. They sorrowed not as those who have no hope; and if at times the thought would come across their minds how great their loss had been, yet still it came blended

with the recollection, that the blossoms which might have withered in the chill blast of this world, had burst into glorious flower in the pure air of heaven.

For the benefit of the remaining children, a change from home had been recommended; and it was during their stay at Dover that Mr. Grenville had proposed to his wife that they should cross over to France, and pay a long-promised visit to a brother-in-law of his, then residing at Paris.

The result of that visit was a proposal from Mrs. Grenville, to take Mrs. Perceval's two children for a time under her own immediate care, under the pretence of relieving the mother from a charge which she fancied too great for her health; but in reality with the hope of withdrawing them from the consequences of the sadly injurious influences to which they were then exposed.

Mrs. Perceval, who cared for nothing but her own amusement and self-indulgence, was delighted with the offer; and it was arranged, that as soon as the Grenvilles were again settled at home, the children should be sent to England on a visit, at any rate, of some months.

"Patter! patter! patter! how horrid this rain is!" exclaimed Charles Perceval impatiently, as for the twentieth time in as many minutes he went to the window to see if

it had not yet left off. "Aunt Helen," he added, as Mrs. Grenville entered the room, "Can't we go out?"

"In all this rain, my love? O certainly not!"

"But it will soon leave off, Aunt: and it will be too late if we do not go at once."

"If you are thinking of your visit to Brenchley, you must give that up for to-day, Charlie;" said Mrs. Grenville kindly.

"There, I told you so," said Ernest. "You had much better have found something to amuse yourself with, instead of staring out of window."

"Hush, Ernest," said Mrs. Grenville; "could you not play with your cousin, instead of speaking so rudely to him."

"I do not want any one to play with me," interrupted Charles impatiently. "But I can't see the sense of having servants and horses, if it is not to use them when they are wanted."

"I am sorry to find you have so very little consideration for others, as is implied both by your words and your manner," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"I did not mean to be rude to you, Aunt Helen," replied Charles, colouring. "But it is so horrid not to be able to go out, when I had been looking forward to it all the afternoon."

"It is disappointing,—but many a greater disappointment must be cheerfully borne, before you can become the hero you told us last night that you wished to be."

"Mamma," said Arthur, "could you not come and sit with us for a little while, and tell us something about a really great and good hero? I always feel better when you have been telling us any of your nice stories. It makes me feel more patient."

"O do, mamma," said Ernest. "I will run and call Mary and Annie.—It will make Charlie forget the rain."

Charlie looked as if he doubted whether it would be followed by any such result; but he was sorry that he had spoken so rudely to his aunt, and he seemed to think he had better listen with a good grace to that from which he could not escape.

"Well, what is it to be?" said Mrs. Grenville, when the little party were duly assembled.

"A good long story, mamma," said Ernest, "I do not care much else what it is."

"I will tell you what I should like, mamma," said Arthur. "Do you remember when I was lying so very ill upon the sofa, Mr. Egerton called one day; he spoke to you about a little church somewhere in Switzerland, I was too weak to listen attentively, but I liked very much what I heard; and I have always meant to ask you about

it? Who were they, mamma, of whom he was speaking, and whom you said were such good people?"

"The Vaudois. Ah! I am glad you remembered it for there is a great deal that is very interesting in their history; and it is one too which will, I think, amuse Charles, as it is full of daring and heroic deeds, and besides it is quite as well that you should know something of the lives of the earliest Protestants."

"Protestants, mamma!" exclaimed Mary; "there were no Protestants till Luther's days, were there?"

"Do you remember what I told you was the meaning of the word Protestant?"

"O yes, I do, mamma!" exclaimed Ernest; "to protest against errors."

"But were there errors before Luther's time?" said Arthur.

"O Arthur," said Ernest, laughing, "that is very stupid of you; why, if there had not been errors, Luther would have had nothing to protest against."

"I did not say there were not errors in Luther's time," replied Arthur, so gently, that Ernest felt quite vexed he had spoken so sharply. "I only thought if people had known of them before, some one else would have been found to protest against them as well as Luther."

"And that is exactly what was the case, my love," said Mrs. Grenville. "As early as the eighth century Claude of Turin, had acquired the reputation for himself, which has since given him the name of the 'good Protestant Bishop.' In 792, the Council of Nice decreed that the worship of images should be lawful. This direct violation of the second commandment opened a door to the greatest abuses; and against these, Claude manfully opposed all the eloquence of his teaching. He was followed in the same course by another most able churchman, named Vigilantius; and to the pure doctrines taught by these two holy men, we are most probably indebted for the foundation of that mountain church where it pleased God that the simple faith of the Gospel should be kept alive in the midst of the ignorance and superstition which overspread the world during the middle ages.

"And whereabouts exactly was this church, mamma?" inquired Ernest.

"In Piedmont and Dauphiny; a line of valleys which run through the mountains bordering France and Switzerland, and the north of Italy.

"But had they only one church between them all, Aunt Helen?" asked Charles.

With a quick glance, Mrs. Grenville tried to check

Ernest's contemptuous expression; but Charles had already noticed it; and, colouring crimson, he added angrily.

"I am sure there is nothing absurd in that, Ernest; Aunt Helen said it was a mountain church."

"Yes, my dear boy," replied his aunt quietly; "I certainly did say so, but I used the term in a general sense, as we do when we speak of the Church of Rome, or the Reformed Church; we do not mean any particular building made with hands, but that form of doctrine by by which we look to be made wise unto salvation."

"O Aunt, yes, I see," said Charles.

"It would have been well for the world if every one could have seen as quickly," continued Mrs. Grenville. "This unfortunate word has been a never-failing source of dissension; and often and often has the Spirit which can alone give force and efficacy to the teaching of the Church, been lost in angry quarrels as to an accurate definition of its meaning, about which even the very apostles themselves could not agree. For about three hundred years after the death of Claude, the doctrines which he had taught continued to be held by the simple-minded mountaineers of Piedmont, without meeting with any opposition from the Romish Church, which was too much occupied with all its ambitious schemes of self-

aggrandisement, to think much of a heresy confined to some valleys almost forgotten by the world. God doubtlessly permitted that the Vaudois should enjoy such a long period of tranquillity, that they might be fitted to endure the years of persecution which were so soon to follow.

"It is generally supposed, that the attention of the Romish Church was fixed upon the Vaudois, by the wonderful success which attended the preaching of Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons, then one of the richest commercial cities in the world. There are two or three different accounts of the way in which he was converted to a knowledge of the truth. The most probable seems to be, that his mind was greatly affected by the sudden and awful death of a very intimate friend."

"Why, mamma," said Arthur, "that was something like Luther."

"Yes it was. Before he had recovered from this shock, he happened to overhear a minstrel reciting in the streets, the life of 'the most holy Saint Alexis.'"

"O Aunt Helen," interrupted Charles, "was the minstrel like one of the people who sing now in the open air in France and Italy. I have often heard them, and some of them are such funny fellows, and they speak so fast, just like this;" and to the infinite amusement of his

cousins, Charles favoured them with a very good imitation of a modern improvisatore.

"Not exactly like that," replied Mrs. Grenville, laughing. "In the days of Waldo," she continued, "books were extremely rare; and their place was in great measure supplied by wandering minstrels and story-tellers. Many of them obtained such influence over the minds of their auditors, that their words were listened to with as much reverence, as though they had been dictated by inspiration itself. Waldo listened to the story of all the saint's wanderings and perils; and contrasting his own luxurious life with that of Alexis, he determined to relinquish his mercantile pursuits, and to spend the remainder of his days in endeavouring to promote the glory of God alone. His first anxiety was to make himself acquainted with the holy Scriptures, that they might be the foundation of all he taught. The Bible was then so little known, that Waldo's style of preaching excited the greatest attention; and crowds came to listen to anything so new and startling. His success was so great, that in a very short time it excited the jealousy of the Romish clergy, who gladly availed themselves of the plea of heresy to procure the condemnation of so formidable a a rival."

"Did they put him to death, mamma?" said Mary.

"No; they contented themselves with banishing him from Lyons. But this proved in the end a most short-sighted policy; for the Waldenses, as they were called from the name of their teacher, followed very literally our Saviour's injunction, that when they were persecuted in one city, they should flee to another; and everywhere that they went, they endeavoured to impart that purer knowledge of the faith, which they had themselves acquired, their own holy and self-denying lives bearing the best testimony to its truth."

"But, mamma," interrupted Ernest, "you said that the first persecution of the Vaudois was caused by the preaching of Waldo. I do not see what he had to do with it."

"Many of his followers," replied Mrs. Grenville, "fled for refuge to the mountains of Piedmont at the first outbreak of the persecution. Here, by degrees, they joined themselves to the inhabitants of the valleys; and then found, probably to their great surprise, that the religion for which they were suffering was identical with that of their protectors: but, unfortunately, their enemies were not slow to make the same discovery; and in 1209 a series of persecutions began, which, with occasional interruptions, has continued to the present day."

"What! more than six hundred years? O mamma!" exclaimed Arthur.

"It is a fearfully long space of time," continued Mrs. Grenville; "more especially if we contrast their sufferings with the blessings, which as a nation we have ourselves enjoyed meanwhile. God's ways, however, are not as ours; and, doubtless, amidst the noble army of martyrs, there are none who esteem their golden crowns too dearly bought, or sufferings however severe, which were but for a season, as to be weighed in the balance with an eternity of joy which shall never pass away. The great scarcity of books in the thirteenth century, renders it difficult to trace the history of the Vaudois at that period with precise accuracy; and such accounts as we have are entirely from the writings of their adversaries; and yet one and all bear witness to their virtue, their fortitude, their patience, and their self-denial. I remember a passage in some old book I was reading, which struck me most forcibly: 'He that will not swear, nor speak evil, nor lie, nor commit injustice and theft, nor take vengeance of his enemies, is called 'Vaudois,' and the cry is 'Death to him!'"

"But in spite of that, I should have been proud of the name," exclaimed Ernest.

"Hundreds agreed with you, Ernest," continued

Mrs. Grenville, "for the more the Vaudois suffered, the more they multiplied; until, at length, in 1487, Pope Innocent VIII., in despair of extinguishing a heresy which threatened to prove so formidable to the power of the Romish Church, issued a bull of extermination, commanding that all good Christians should take up arms for the subjugation of the Vaudois, promising the greatest blessings to those engaged in this holy war, and even ensuring the remission of his sins to any one who should, with his own hand, slay a heretic."

"O mamma!" exclaimed Mary, in horror.

"It is, indeed, dreadful to think," replied her mother, "that the Pope, who claimed to be God's representative on earth, should so fearfully have abused his trust, as to have employed his power for the destruction of the followers of Christ, instead of for the furtherance of that holy religion, whose chief characteristic is, 'Peace on earth, good will towards men.' But not content with the mere promise of blessings in the life to come, Innocent held out the prospect of earthly advantage to such as engaged in the war of extermination, absolving them from any obligations which might be inconvenient to them to discharge, and allowing them to seize at their pleasure the property of the Vaudois, and retain it legally as their own. No wonder that many thousands of lawless men were only too ready to profit by such offers."

"But I wonder," said Ernest, "that they did not see how wicked it was."

"It only shows how easy it is to deceive ourselves as to our own motives," replied Mrs. Grenville. "It is surprising how soon either self-love or self-interest may blind even high-principled people to the truth."

"But was it a regular army, Aunt Helen?" asked Charles. "If all these people were not soldiers, the Vaudois would have a good chance against them."

"In the sixteenth century, society was very differently constituted from what it is now," replied Mrs. Grenville. "To be a soldier was the only profession thought worthy of a gentleman; and the constant wars, both foreign and domestic, in which almost every kingdom was engaged, naturally trained the people to a knowledge of arms, and inspired them with the love of fighting. A very short time, therefore, generally sufficed for the assembling of a considerable force; and this was peculiarly the case in the present instance, when the hope of eternal reward was united to the certainty of present gain. A very large army, therefore, joined by 18,000 regular troops, under the command of the Pope's legate, named Albert Cataneo, marched forward towards the mountains of Piedmont.

"The Vaudois were dreadfully alarmed at the announce-

ment of the near approach of so formidable an enemy. In vain they endeavoured to discover in what consisted their crime. They, who only sought to serve God faithfully, and do good in their generation. Alas! their very virtues were their crime; there was but one choice for them, either they must immediately abjure their religion, or they must be content to perish miserably by fire and sword."

"I think I know which they chose, mamma!" exclaimed Arthur.

"Yes! I see by your face that you have guessed rightly," replied Mrs. Grenville. "They immediately sent a deputation to meet Cataneo; and after professing their extreme desire to do all things becoming good and loyal subjects of their king, they added, that there was but one point on which they could not obey him. From the Bible they had learned the knowledge of the truth. They had found their happiness in the pure and simple faith of that Holy Book; and it was dearer to them than life with all its blessings. We cannot abandon our faith in God, they said; and we feel sure that then He will never abandon us. Remember, if He wills it, all the forces you have assembled against us, can avail you nothing.

"Cataneo, seeing that there was no hope of converting

them by argument, immediately advanced his whole army, intending to surround them before they were prepared for their defence, and to destroy them at one blow. He had miscalculated, however, the source from whence the Vaudois drew their strength."

"Why, who helped them?" said Charles.

"O mamma means that they trusted in God, and He was the best helper; don't you, mamma?" said Arthur.

"It was 'not their own sword, nor their own arm,' that saved them," replied Mrs. Grenville, "'but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance: through Thee will we push down our enemies, and tread them under that rise up against us.' These words of David were no doubt in their recollection as they prepared for their defence; for whilst they left nothing undone which could be accomplished by human skill and foresight, they trusted the issue to a higher strength than their own. Their first care was to remove their families to the most inaccessible spots of the mountains, and then to erect barricades along their lines of defences, which they protected with shields covered with the skins of animals and the bark of chesnut trees, which rendered them quite impervious to the arrows and pikes,

fortunately for them the only weapons employed by their enemies."

"O I see," said Charles; "they had quite the advantage; for they could safely shoot from behind their defences, whilst it would be very difficult for the soldiers to get at them, up at the top of the hill."

"This is precisely what was the case," continued Mrs. Grenville; "and Cataneo had made one very great mistake in the arrangement of his forces. In the hope of enclosing the whole of the Vaudois population in one common destruction, he had spread out his army over much too large a space of ground, and consequently had not sufficient strength to force the well chosen positions of the Vaudois, who could thus at their pleasure roll down stones upon the advancing army, or take sure aim with their arrows and pikes from behind their fortifications; and it soon became evident that the invaders had met with much more formidable antagonists than they had expected. On one point only did they seem to lose ground; but this, unfortunately, was a most important one, just in the centre of their line of defences. Great exertion had been made both to gain and to defend so important a position; but, at length, the force of overwhelming numbers seemed to defy the resistance of the

noble-minded mountaineers. Already Cataneo's forces had mounted the hill, and excited by their success, seemed on the point of carrying the redoubt.—

"The Vaudois fell on their knees, exclaiming, 'O Lord, save us! O Lord, help us!'

"'You shall be saved, with a vengeance!' cried one of the chiefs of the conquering army, and he raised his visor as he spoke, as if to defy still more contemptuously the group of kneeling supplicants.

"Scarcely had he uttered the words, when an arrow, shot by one of the Vaudois, entered his temple, and he fell lifeless to the ground. The death of their leader stopped for a minute the advancing column. The Vaudois profiting by the momentary panic, rushed from behind the stronghold. The soldiers first wavered; then turned and fled. The panic became general; and in their anxiety to escape, the soldiers fell the one upon the other; hundreds were thus precipitated over the rocks, and perished miserably, untouched by the hand of man."

"I dare say, mamma," said Mary, "they were sorry then that they had sneered at the Vaudois."

"It did not, however, prevent them making a fresh effort to obtain possession of this fortified post on the succeeding day."

"Of course not, aunt," exclaimed Charles;" they would have been great cowards if they had given it up at the first attempt."

"The courage of men, however, avails but little against the will of God," replied his aunt. "Hardly had Cataneo set his troops in motion, when one of the fogs, which occasionally arise very rapidly in the Alps, came on suddenly, completely enveloping the army. The men, already disheartened by the defeat which they had sustained on the previous day, and utterly ignorant of the country over which they were marching, soon fell into complete disorder, and fled on the first rumour of the approach of their adversaries; a far larger number perished by being dashed to pieces in falling over the rocks and precipices, than fell beneath the sword of the pursuers. This signal victory, which was attributed by both sides to the direct interposition of God, produced a temporary cessation of hostilities, which was further prolonged by the intelligence which reached Cataneo, of the entire destruction of a body of 700 men, whom he had sent to surround the Vaudois in the rear, whilst he, with his army, attacked them in front."

"And did the fog reach them, too, mamma?" asked Mary.

"They found quite sufficient to contend with without

a fog," replied her mother, "for their path lay up the most inaccessible hills, on the summits of which the Vaudois had securely posted themselves, and down which they rolled huge fragments of rock upon the invading army. To advance with the certainty of being crushed to death, required a greater amount of courage than that possessed by Cataneo's soldiers, and, panic-stricken, they turned and fled. But even flight could not avail them. Utterly ignorant of the country in which they found themselves, they wandered about, becoming more and more entangled in its gorges and ravines, until, of the 700 who a few days previously had entered, with all the certainty of triumph, one man alone remained to tell the miserable tale, and he would have perished, had it not been for the kindness of some Vaudois peasants, who found him dying from cold and hunger, and who after having hospitably supplied his wants, allowed him to depart without ransom to rejoin his commander."

"That was, indeed, following our Saviour's injunction," said Arthur, "to do good to those who hate us."

"And like every other good action," continued Mrs. Grenville, "brought its own reward. The report which this man spread of the kindness which he had received from the Vaudois, formed a good excuse for commencing

a negociation for peace, which both Cataneo and the Duke of Savoy were most anxious to secure."

"But that was not very honourable, I think," said Ernest. "They knew before how good the Vaudois were, and now they only wanted peace because they had been beaten."

"Exactly," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but they naturally sought some excuse which should be less galling to their pride, than to acknowledge that they were unable to conquer foes whom they had professed to hold in such supreme contempt. It is, however, possible that the Duke of Savoy, and those high in authority, knew very little of the real character of the Vaudois; for before the peace was signed, the Duke begged that some of the Vaudois children should be sent to him, that he might see them."

"O I hope they did not let them go," said Mary. "I dare say he only wanted to put them to death."

"To do him justice," replied Mrs. Grenville, "he had no such wicked intentions; his only wish was, to ascertain the truth of a report which he had heard, that the Vaudois children were born with black throats, hairy teeth, and goat's feet."

"O mamma! O aunt!" exclaimed the children, "could he really have believed such stuff?"

"Yes; he really thought it probable, if not positively true; and when the children were brought to him, he exclaimed in astonishment, that he had never seen any more beautiful, and could hardly be persuaded that these could indeed be the Vaudois heretics, of which he had heard such dreadful reports. It only shows the strength of prejudice, and how easily truth is sacrificed to any strong prepossession."

"It was all very well then, aunt," said Charles, contemptuously; "but no one would believe such nonsense now."

"No one would, perhaps, believe now that children were born with goat's feet," replied Mrs. Grenville, "but I am afraid we shall find that even very clever people in the present days are by no means free from the absurd prejudices which are almost invariably the companions of ignorance; and when we pride ourselves upon our superior advantages, and, thinking ourselves better than others, refuse to believe that there can be any good in those who do not hold precisely the same opinions, or adopt the same customs as ourselves, we are, in fact, but very little wiser than the Duke of Savoy, though our folly may not assume so ridiculous a form."

"But was he more ready to make peace, mamma," said Arthur, "when he saw how pretty the children were?"

"He signed a treaty," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but it was only to give himself the opportunity of withdrawing the remains of his army in safety. The Roman Catholic Church holds one most convenient tenet, that it is quite unnecessary to keep faith with a heretic; and the Duke, therefore, merely awaited a suitable opportunity of making a fresh attack upon those who had hitherto so gloriously defied his power. I have not time now, however, to tell you of what took place during the second persecution of the Vaudois; and look, there is quite a bright gleam of sunshine; you will get a famous run on the terrace before tea, or I should not be surprised if papa would take you for a gallop on the downs."

"O that would be nice!" exclaimed Charles. "Thank you, Aunt Helen; and thank you, too, for telling us this story. It has made me forget the rain; and the time has gone so fast—I had no idea how fast."

"Ah, you did not know what mamma was!" said Arthur.

"But I know what she is;" exclaimed Charles, "a dear, kind auntie, who tells very good stories, and makes still better plans;" and without waiting for more, off ran Ernest and Charles to find Mr. Grenville, and gain his approval of the very agreeable proposition of a good gallop before tea.

CHAPTER II.

FOR the next few days, very little was talked of amongst the children but the preparations for an approaching festival, which was kept every year at the Grange, in honour of Mr. Grenville's birthday, and to which the whole neighbourhood always looked forward with especial delight. It had originally been intended only for Mr. Grenville's immediate dependants; but by degrees its fame had increased, until it numbered among its visitors nearly the whole population of the little village of Allerton. Nothing but his own misconduct precluded a villager from receiving the coveted invitation, and many a lad was kept steady, and many a maiden rendered doubly industrious, from the dread of being excluded from the festivities of the Grange, an exclusion which would inevitably point them out for the ensuing year as persons to be generally avoided.

"But when dinner is over, and the people begin their games," said Charles, as the boys were waiting in the

drawing-room for the last touches to be put to some ornamental banners, on which Mrs. Grenville and the girls were hard at work, "you only walk about amongst the tenantry, I suppose."

"Walk about amongst the tenantry!" repeated Ernest, laughing at his cousin's manner." "Why, the great fun of all is to play with them."

"Play with them," reiterated Charles. "What! play with such very common boys?"

"You will find they will beat you at cricket nevertheless," said Ernest, "if you do not improve very much between this and Thursday, Master Charlie. Why they beat us sometimes, and we all play, papa plays, and—" But Ernest stopped suddenly; for, as he looked at his mother, and saw the tears gather in her eyes, he remembered who had played so cheerily on their last merry meeting, and knew that she was thinking of him who was now in heaven. But this, of course, did not occur to Charles, and he only replied somewhat contemptuously—

"Well, I think it is very odd my uncle should do such a thing. I am sure papa will not approve of my playing with plough-boys."

"Do you remember how astonished you were the other day," said Mrs. Grenville, as she looked up with a gentle smile, "at the ignorance of the Duke of Savoy, in

imagining the Vaudois children were born with goat's feet?"

"Yes, aunt; but what in the world has that got to do with our games on Thursday?"

"Are you sure that you are much wiser when you think yourself so superior to those around you?"

"But I do not think that they —" and Charles stopped suddenly.

"You do not think they have goat's feet. No, I know you do not," replied Mrs. Grenville, laughing; "but can you give me a better reason for not wishing to play with them?"

"O I know why, Aunt Helen."

"Why?" inquired Mrs. Grenville, very quietly.

"Because—because—" said Charles, stammering and colouring. "But do you want us to make friends of boys like those, Aunt Helen?"

"Charles, that is not answering my question," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and therefore I shall reply by another. Is it necessary that these boys should be your friends, because you play with them on such an occasion as that of which we are now speaking?"

"O it puts us all on an equality if we play together," persisted Charles.

"You need not be alarmed, no one will wish you to play with them," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But now,

see, I have finished these banners; we will carry them down to the tents. Run on, Ernest, first; and tell papa I am coming. I am quite sure, Charles, my love," continued Mrs. Grenville, when she found herself alone with her nephew, "that your better nature is telling you all this time how sillily you are acting."

Charles was silent.

"And were I to tell you at this moment, that I should forbid your playing at all on Thursday, it would, I know, be the greatest possible punishment; but I would rather, first of all, help you to conquer this foolish pride, otherwise, I assure you, this prohibition will be the result."

"But papa never will allow me to play with any but gentlemen's sons," said Charles, who was determined not to allow himself to be in the wrong.

"Charles, you are not speaking the truth," replied Mrs. Grenville, calmly; "you know that you are acting wrongly, and you are only seeking fresh excuses to justify conduct of which you are ashamed."

"I am sure papa would say so," reiterated Charles. "He would be very angry about it."

"You certainly then shall not run the risk of incurring your papa's displeasure; you may return now to the library, and wait till I come in. If you are not then in a very different temper, I shall at once forbid your taking any part in the games of Thursday."

Had a thunderbolt fallen at his feet, Charles could not have been more surprised. Mrs. Grenville's manner was ordinarily so gentle, that he was quite unprepared for the firm decision of her present tone. It never occurred to him for a moment to dispute her authority; and for the first time in his life he found himself quietly doing what he was bid. The following hour was spent in a most uncomfortable struggle between his pride and his desire of obtaining permission to join his cousins in their Thursday's amusements; and his mind was still in a miserable state of uncertainty when he heard merry voices approaching the library, and his aunt and the children entered the room. Alas! for Charles. He could not bear the sound of that merry laughter; and avoiding Mrs. Grenville's look, he stood doggedly by the window, apparently absorbed in counting the number of animalculæ dancing in the warm spring air.

"Come, Charles," said Ernest; "mamma is going to tell us some more about the Vaudois."

But Charles took no notice. Ernest looked at his mother.

"Charles must do as he likes," replied Mrs. Grenville; and Charles moved slowly and ungraciously towards the seat which his cousin had put for him.

The children were all silent. A spell seemed to have

fallen upon them, which had dissipated their mirth. O you who give way recklessly to ill temper, how little do you think of the infinite mischief which you are doing! Say a child has no power for good and evil! You should have seen the little party at the Grange at that moment, and you would never have said so again.

Even Mrs. Grenville felt the influence of Charles' bad temper, and for a moment she thought she would desire him to leave the room; but the hope that he might yet make an effort to conquer his fault deterred her. Without taking any further notice of the sullen boy, she continued—

"I think I left off, did I not, just where Cataneo had withdrawn his army from the Vaudois valley?"

"Yes, mamma; the duke had just made peace."

"Did it last?" inquired Mary.

"Yes, nominally it lasted for some considerable time," replied her mother; "but the Romish party availed themselves of every possible opportunity of injuring those whom they looked upon as heretics, and many a lowly Christian suffered martyrdom during these years of professed toleration. One of them I was always peculiarly sorry for. He was a brave noble man of the name of Varaille. His very enemies could not help respecting and loving him. Every effort was made to induce him

to abjure his faith, but he was inflexible; and when his sentence of death was at length pronounced—

"'Be assured,' he replied, firmly, 'that you will sooner want wood wherewith to burn us, than we, ministers ready to burn in seal of their faith; from day to day they multiply, and the Word of God endureth for ever.'

"Nor was it only amongst men that this heroism was displayed; the women were just as brave and as ready to suffer death for the sake of their faith in Christ. But the manner of their death was often so dreadfully cruel that it would be quite impossible for me to relate the particulars to you. It will give you some idea of how much they suffered when I tell you, that at one time a body of troops suddenly attacked a village in the valley of Prejalos, massacring without pity all whom they could seize. Those who escaped were reserved for a death almost more painful, for eighty poor women with their little children were found frozen to death in the snow."

"O mamma, how dreadful!" said Ernest.

"Yes," said Arthur; "and think how painful it is to bear a little cold. I am sure, when my feet get very cold, I often feel ready to cry, and yet I am sitting in a nice warm room with a famous fire. O mamma, what should I have done, if I had been one of those poor children?"

"I dare say you would have tried, my love, to bear your sufferings as well as you could. I am sure you try to be very patient now."

"O that he does, mamma," exclaimed both Mary and Ernest; "Arthur never complains."

Poor Arthur! his little pallid cheeks quite flushed with pleasure.

"You are all so kind," he said, "which makes it so much easier to be patient; but I do often long to run about, when I see you all playing so happily."

"That is only natural, my darling," replied his mother, kindly. "To be a martyr for the cause of God, it is not necessary to suffer death. A martyr means one who is willing cheerfully to endure pain for Christ's sake; and if it should be God's will that you should continue to suffer on earth, there may be the brighter crown reserved for you hereafter;" and Mrs. Grenville's eyes filled with tears as she spoke.

"O mamma dear, for a little child like me?"

"Yes, my love; none are too young to run the race in which the prize is an immortal crown. A child may, for Christ Jesus' sake, earn as rich a recompense as a full grown man, just as a child may, by his ill-humour or his misconduct, bring as much discredit on the name of Christ as one far more advanced in years. The mischief

may not be as widely spread, but the unhappiness produced in his own family will be quite as deeply felt."

It was Charles' turn to colour now, but from a very different feeling. Mrs. Grenville, however, took no notice, and continued:

"It was singular, amidst all the sufferings to which the Vaudois were from time to time exposed, how often the hand of God seemed especially stretched forth for their protection. At one time, five of these poor people were condemned to be burnt alive. Every preparation was made, and the day of execution arrived, when such a violent storm of snow set in, that it was found impossible to set fire to the wood; the spectacle was, therefore, postponed to a future day, and the Vaudois led back to their prison. Whether this providential delay inspired their friends with greater energy I do not know; but certain it is, that before the weather had sufficiently moderated to allow of the execution of the sentence, the prisoners were safe from all present danger amidst the fastnesses of their mountain home."

"Had they escaped from their prison then, aunt?" said Annie.

"Yes, fortunately for them; and their lives bore testimony to the gratitude they owed to Him who had so wonderfully preserved them. Nowhere do you find more

earnest simple-minded devotion to the cause of Christ than amongst the annals of the Vaudois peasantry. In fact, so truly did they live up to the doctrines which they professed, that many who were sent with authority against them, were so struck with the holiness of their lives, that they refused to execute judgment upon them, preferring to lose their rank and commissions rather than to be guilty of the evident sin of persecuting such meek and lowly Christians. One nobleman especially—the Count de Racconis—not only refused to join in the persecution, of which he had originally been one of the promoters, but desired the Vaudois pastors to draw up a statement of the doctrines which they believed, promising himself to lay this statement before the pope, as he imagined that it must produce the same conviction to the pontiff's mind which it had already effected in his own."

"And did it, mamma?" inquired Mary, earnestly.

"Alas! no," replied Mrs. Grenville. "The popes were so accustomed to consider themselves infallible, and their power unbounded, that it required a stronger than man to carry conviction to their hearts. Pius IV. contented himself with replying coldly, that it did not suit the dignity of the church to argue. It was the people's duty to submit implicitly to her authority, and in all things to obey. The only concession the pope could be

induced to make was, that a legate should be sent to the Vaudois valleys, who should be empowered to grant forgiveness to those who would at once repent of their waywardness, listen to his preaching, and conform to his instructions."

"A queer sort of concession that, I think," said Ernest; "not much to be grateful for."

"Not much, indeed," replied his mother. "Directly that Possevino (that was the legate's name) arrived at Cavour, he summoned the deputies of the Vaudois to appear before him, and demanded whether they would come and attend his preaching.

"'Yes,' replied the undaunted men, 'if you will preach the word of God to us; but if you intend to destroy that word by human traditions, no, never will we come.'"

"That was very brave," said Ernest. "Was Possevino very angry with them?"

"He thought it was his interest to dissimulate; and, therefore, merely replied, that they might be sure he would preach the pure gospel. How well he acted up to its doctrines the following anecdote will show. Whilst he was still in discussion with the deputies, a Vaudois arrived, to complain to the commander of Cavour, that some Roman Catholics had forcibly taken his cattle away from him. On his remonstrating, they had promised to

return them for a hundred crowns. With difficulty the unfortunate man collected the money; but no sooner had he paid it over as the ransom of his cattle, than he was sent away with every mark of ignominy, the Romanists retaining both the cattle and the money. It was for reparation for this double robbery that he now came to seek justice from the governor and the legate."

"Pretty justice he will get, I expect," said Ernest.

"'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,' was certainly not the rule which Possevino followed," replied Mrs. Grenville, "when he angrily told the unfortunate man that nothing should be done for him.

"'Had you gone to mass,' he added, 'this never would have happened; and rest assured, this is only the commencement of what is reserved for heretics.'"

"The deputies must have gone home, having heard quite enough of the preaching of the legate, I think," said Ernest.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Grenville; "one such practical sermon must have produced more effect than hundreds of eloquent discourses, more especially as it was speedily followed by the announcement, that if mass were not immediately re-established the Vaudois would be driven from their valleys by force of arms."

"O mamma, what did become of them," exclaimed Arthur; "for I am quite sure they did not consent to re-establish the mass?"

"So far from it," replied Mrs. Grenville, "that when the Count of Luzerna and other influential persons, who had been won over by the virtues of the Vaudois to espouse their cause, at least in secret, urged upon them the necessity of appearing to give way just for a short period, until the violence of the persecution was expended, and of sending away their pastors to take refuge in distant countries.

"'No,' exclaimed the people, 'if we are ashamed of God's ministers, God will be ashamed of us.'

"This noble reply was unanswerable. Both sides prepared for war; and now one of the most striking proofs of the iniquity of this persecution was afforded by the Roman Catholics themselves. The army which was collected to act against the Vaudois was formed very much as the previous one had been, of the most desperate adventurers whom the hope of plunder could possibly collect together. It might be very true, that these men, from their savage natures, were admirably qualified for torturing the unfortunate heretics against whom they were marching; but it had been quite overlooked, that the same characteristics might render them dangerous

alike to friend and foe. Entirely devoid of discipline, no sooner were their passions excited, than, quite regardless of whether it was Romanist or Protestant, they laid violent hands on every person or thing which came in their way, whenever they thought they could in any way minister to the gratification of their passions or their wants. The nobility and the proprietors of the lands which lay in their route towards Piedmont were seized with a perfect panic in this hour of peril."

"They did not become Protestants, did they, mamma?" interrupted Mary.

"No, not exactly that," replied Mrs. Grenville, "but they sent their children, and all that they valued most dearly, to the keeping of the Vaudois heretics, feeling sure that they alone were to be trusted, thus affording the surest evidence of how utterly without foundation were all the calumnies which were spread against them, since, in the hour of peril and perplexity, it was amongst the Vaudois alone that they felt sure of finding honour and integrity."

"And did the Vaudois receive the children, mamma?" enquired Arthur.

"They did, indeed, and in the full spirit of our Saviour's words, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for

them which despitefully use you, and persecute you,' for not only did they receive and take as much care of them as if they had been their own children, but when the time came for them to restore them to their parents, they gave them back without thought of recompense or reward."

"O mamma!" exclaimed Ernest joyfully, "then the Vaudois conquered."

"Patience!" replied Mrs. Grenville.

"O they did, mamma, or they could not have given back the children."

Mrs. Grenville smiled. "Ah, and that smile makes me quite sure, mamma," continued Ernest.

"Ernest, do not interrupt Aunt Helen," said Annie. "We are just coming to an interesting point." And even Charles condescended to look up as if he was interested.

"The Vaudois," continued Mrs. Grenville, "lost no time in removing from the valleys everything which they possessed of any value; and a curious and touching sight it must have been, to see the processions winding up the mountain sides—led by their pastors.—Whilst all of every age and denomination, from the old man whose strength was almost spent, to the child who had only just learned to lisp his Saviour's name, joined in singing hymns to that God whom they served, and to whom alone they looked for deliverance."

"They had scarcely time to fortify themselves amongst their mountain strong-holds, when news was brought that the army was advancing. With resolute courage the Vaudois prepared for their defence. In the first day's fighting, they were not successful in their attempts to repel the enemy, and were obliged to retire to the higher grounds behind their entrenchments. Nothing daunted, however, they made hasty preparations for defence, and then throwing themselves on their knees they earnestly besought God to save them in this sad time of peril. So fervent were their supplications, that the sound of their hymns and prayers was distinctly audible in the camp of their enemies, and afforded them matter of ridicule and amusement—as in the security of triumph, they were busily preparing their evening meal, Their mirth, however, was very soon changed into mourning, by one of those strange occurrences which men are so fond of calling chance, but which, it appears to me should more than any thing else convince us, that in all the minor accidents of life, as well as in its greatest and most startling events, there is an almighty Providence overruling the affairs of men. It so happened, that whilst the Vaudois were busily engaged in preparing for their defence, a child unseen by any one had taken possession of a drum, and dragged it to a ravine at some

considerable distance. No one missed either the child or its plaything. Suddenly in the dim twilight, a loud drumming was distinctly audible. The soldiers who had so lately been amusing themselves with taunting and ridiculing adversaries, over whom they expected to obtain an easy conquest, started up in terror, and seizing their arms, prepared to defend themselves against the enemy whom they never doubted was prepared to surprise them in the rear. The Vaudois on the contrary, were equally astonished to see this sudden movement amongst the invading troops, and naturally supposing that they were preparing for a night attack, determined to avail themselves of their better knowledge of the country, by becoming themselves the assailants. Rushing down therefore upon the troops they completed the panic which the child's accidental drumming had commenced. The invaders thinking themselves surrounded on all sides, fled precipitately before imaginary foes, throwing away their arms and ammunition, and rushing headlong down precipices in their eager haste to escape."

"And all this fright was caused by a child beating a drum?" said Ernest. "And how very little he thought at the time, mamma, what service he was rendering his party."

"Very little, indeed,—yet God over-ruled even so

apparently insignificant an event, that it became the means of securing the safety of those who had put their trust in Him."

"But do you think, mamma," said Ernest thoughtfully, "that God often makes use of such little things, for bringing great events to pass.—I mean little things, like a child beating a drum."

"My dear boy," replied his mother. "The question you have just asked, involves some of the most difficult matters of our faith; and it would be utterly impossible for me to reply to it in a manner which could make you understand that which has puzzled some of the most learned and excellent men who have ever lived. But one point I may make clear to you,—that as it is impossible for us to judge what are great causes, or what are not, we should be most careful to encourage that true spirit of humility, which will enable us neither to over-estimate ourselves, nor to despise others. 'For as God has chosen the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise, and the weak things of this world to confound the mighty.' We cannot say but that the humblest amongst us may, by His power be rendered as instrumental in furthering His almighty plans, as the noblest, or most educated in the land."

"Aunt Helen," said Charles softly, in a low voice, and

colouring deeply as he spoke. "I see what you meant now."

Mrs. Grenville really had not thought of him as she spoke; and, looking hastily up, she read in an instant the struggle for self-conquest which was going on in the child's proud nature. "That is right, my dear boy," she said kindly. "No one can do more than acknowledge a fault as soon as they see it; and you have been so little accustomed to have your attention directed to such subjects, that I am not surprised that you did not see it at once."

"O Aunt Helen!" exclaimed Charles, as he sprung up from his seat, and threw himself on his knees by her side. "I do not deserve that you should speak to me so kindly, I do not indeed. I have been very naughty, but I am very sorry,—indeed I am."

Mrs. Grenville gently raised the agitated boy, and telling the children she would return to them very soon, put her hand in Charles's, and, leading him out on the terrace which overlooked the park, "My dear boy," she said kindly, "you cannot think how pleased I am to see the effort which you have now made to conquer your fault. I know what an effort it has been to you, and I, therefore, shall not attempt to point out to you how very wrongly you have acted, because I am quite sure you feel it already."

"Indeed, indeed, I do, Aunt Helen.—And I am so sorry, indeed I am."

"I am sure you are—but it must not be mere empty sorrow, Charles."

"But I may play with the boys on Thursday, may I not, Aunt Helen?" exclaimed Charles hastily, his conscience pointing out to him, that this prohibition might be a most appropriate punishment. Mrs. Grenville was silent. "Aunt Helen, dear, you have forgiven me have you not?" continued Charles. "You would not speak so kindly if you had not, would you?"

"I may have forgiven you, my dear boy," replied Mrs. Grenville; "without thinking it right that your misconduct should be passed so lightly over. Remember, punishment is the result of sin,—not of the anger of the person who inflicts it."

This was a very new doctrine to Charles; and he looked up in evident amazement. He had been so accustomed only to think of punishment as a consequence of mamma being cross or tired, that it never occurred to him that it might be his own misconduct which might bring it down upon himself.

"If you were quite a little child," continued Mrs. Grenville; "and you had done wrong, or disobeyed me, I should merely punish you without remark, because you

would not be old enough to understand my reasons for doing so, though you might be quite old enough to understand that you had not been obedient. But I think it more important to you now, at your present age, to feel that you are an accountable agent before God; and that you are not at liberty to give way to your bad humour, making yourself and every body about you as wretched as you have this afternoon, any more than you will be at liberty, when you are a man, to break God's laws and commit actual sins against your fellow creatures."

"Then may I not play, on Thursday?" said Charles, in whose mind at the moment, this certainly was the predominant idea.

"I will not say positively, that you shall not join your cousins," replied Mrs. Grenville; "because, I should be so very sorry that your uncle's birthday should be made unhappy by your being in punishment. It shall depend entirely on yourself; if I have not to find fault with you again before Thursday: then—"

"O Aunt Helen!" interrupted Charles eagerly; "indeed, I will be so good. I will not do one naughty thing. O thank you, Aunt Helen!"

"Stop, Charles," said his aunt calmly; "you would not give me time to finish what I was going to say.

Though I wish you to have the opportunity of redeeming the past, yet I should not think it at all right, that it should be so speedily forgotten. I cannot let you knowingly do wrong, and yet allow you to have exactly the same enjoyment, as if you had been trying to do right. To-night, therefore, when your cousins and sister come into the dining-room,—you must remain by yourself in the study."

Charles's countenance fell, but he made no reply; and, as Mrs. Grenville happened at that moment, to be summoned to receive some visitors, she was obliged merely to tell the children, as she passed through the study, that she must postpone the remainder of the story till the next convenient opportunity. Her conversation, however, was not lost upon Charles, who was really of a fine, generous, nature although it had been sadly injured by injudicious management. It was particularly flattering to him to be treated as a rational being; and as he entertained a thorough respect for his aunt, it was a great object with him to stand well in her estimation. He therefore made the greatest possible effort, to show her that he was deserving of her confidence; and no boy could have behaved better, or have been more kind and considerate towards others, than he was during the next two succeeding days.

CHAPTER III.

"MAMMA," said Ernest, as the children were all together in the drawing-room on the Wednesday evening, "now that we are all ready for to-morrow, do you not think it would be a good opportunity to go on with your story. It is so tiresome when there is nothing more to do, to be sitting expecting.

"I think you might find something to do," replied Mrs. Grenville. "There need not be such an utter dearth of occupation, because there is no more grass to roll, or tents to ornament. But, however, I am quite ready and willing, if you wish it."

"O yes, mamma, do, please," said Arthur; "you left off rather suddenly last time, just as the regular troops had been frightened by the child's beating the drum; and I want to know what happened to the Vaudois next."

"They followed up their victory with so much spirit," continued Mrs. Grenville, "that the invaders became

disheartened, and their general thought he should be far more likely to succeed by treaty than by fighting. He, therefore, sent to say, that if the Vaudois would lay down their arms, he would forward to the Duke of Savoy any memorial of their wishes which they might like to draw up."

"O mamma," said Ernest, "did they consent? for I am afraid it is only a take in."

"They made the same discovery too soon to their cost," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for no sooner had they consented to the proposals of the Count de la Trinité, than he took advantage of the helpless state to which they had reduced themselves, to attack one of the least protected portions of their territories: rendered doubly unprotected at the moment, as the greater number of the men were absent, busily discussing the terms of the treaty, which had been so artfully proposed to them. The most dreadful scenes of outrage ensued; for how could women and children protect themselves against the violence of a brutal soldiery. Their houses were plundered and burnt; and they themselves dragged off as prisoners, or put to a cruel death."

"How dreadful!" said Charles, indignantly; "and in spite, too, of all treaties."

"It so happened," continued Mrs. Grenville, "that

some few escaped from the general carnage; and these persons lost no time in carrying the dreadful tidings to their compatriots assembled at Bonneto. You may imagine the rage and indignation with which they were received. The assembled Vaudois never thought for a moment of the disparity of their number, but started instantly in pursuit of the destroyers, and most fortunately overtook them. The desire of winning back their wives and children, and of avenging their cruel wrongs, inspired them with such irresistible strength and courage, that the troops were quite unable to stand against them. They gave way on every side; and the Vaudois returned in triumph, carrying with them their rescued families."

"But it must have been very sad when they got back to their villages, mamma," said Mary, "to see all their houses burnt, and everything destroyed."

"It must, indeed, have been most sad," replied Mrs. Grenville. "All hope of obtaining redress was perfectly useless; for when the Vaudois represented to the Count de la Trinité, that it was in reliance on his word of honour that they had laid down their arms, and that this attack was therefore a gross breach of faith, and as such ought to be visited upon his own troops, he only replied: 'It was done without his knowledge, and, therefore, he could not be made responsible.'"

"A pretty general, indeed!" exclaimed Charles, "and very fit I should think he was to command, if he did not know what his soldiers were about."

"The Vaudois would probably have had recourse to more stringent measures than mere remonstrances," continued Mrs. Grenville, "if they had not been alarmed for the safety of their deputies, who had gone to the court of the Duke of Savoy, to lay their case before him; and the dread of endangering the lives of the noble champions of their faith, induced the people to listen to any negociation which seemed to promise a hope of peace."

"O what a pity!" said Ernest; "they will only be deceived again."

"Feeling sure that whilst he could retain the deputies as hostages, he could induce the Vaudois to make almost any amount of sacrifice, the Count de la Trinité next refused to withdraw his troops from the valleys until he had been paid a sum of 20,000 crowns. The Vaudois naturally objected to so ruinous a demand. 'Well,' said the cunning general, if you will promise me 100 crowns for myself, I will try to get the fine lessened to 16,000.'"

"No sooner had the required promise been given, than the Vaudois learned that the Duke of Savoy, in consideration of their late severe sufferings, had remitted

the fine one half. With the greatest joy, though with considerable difficulty, they made up the sum, and taking it to the Count, begged that now, at last, the army might be withdrawn.

" 'Stop, stop,' replied the Count, 'you promised me 16,000 crowns. Here are but 10,000.'

" 'The Duke has remitted the remainder,' replied the people, showing the promise.

" 'That may be; but I have not,' returned the Count. 'Not a soldier leaves the valley, till every farthing of the debt is paid.'

" Remonstrance was vain. Everything the poor Vaudois possessed, must be sold to meet the required demand. At length, the sum was raised. But the army did not stir.

" 'I came into these valleys,' said the Count, 'to drive from them shepherds who mislead their sheep; nor will I stir till every pastor is banished.' "

" O the poor Vaudois! What did they do, mamma?" exclaimed Mary.

" What could they do?—defenceless—robbed—their deputies detained prisoners? They were obliged to yield to the force of circumstances, and consent to part with those from whom they had once thought no earthly power could separate them."

"I wish they had not yielded," said Ernest.

"It was difficult to see how else they could act," replied his mother. "The parting was a most painful one; cheered only by the thought, that it would not be for long. The instant that their deputies returned in safety, that instant they declared they would send for their beloved pastors."

"I think, mamma," said Arthur, "they had learned rather a lesson of dissimulation themselves."

"I am afraid they had," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and this is one of the causes which renders war so terrible in its results. It is bad enough that famine, pestilence, and depopulation should be its invariable attendants; but worse than all, is the moral degradation which must, sooner or later, be the result, when deceit and falsehood are thought to be not only justifiable, but almost the necessary means of success. I do not know, however, that the Vaudois were so very much to blame. The sending away of their pastors was entirely compulsory, and the Count de la Trinité could hardly have supposed that they would not be recalled, should the opportunity present itself. Fortunately, this took place sooner than they expected."

"The deputies got back safely, then?" said Mary.

"They had been led to expect," continued her mother,

"that they would be received with consideration at the court of the Duke of Savoy, and that their claims would receive, at least, a patient hearing. Instead of this, they found the Duke would not listen to anything they had to say, and that they, themselves, were only exposed to the eager remonstrances of the Roman Catholic priesthood, anxious to win them over to the Roman faith."

"This time they did not yield, did they, mamma?" exclaimed Ernest.

"They did not, indeed," replied Mrs. Grenville. Neither threats nor persecutions were of the slightest avail; and, at length, finding how impossible it was to shake their faith, the Duke dismissed them, desiring them to return to their countrymen, and tell them that, if they did not instantly abjure their religion, and receive the Romish priests as their ministers, war should be again declared, nor should it cease, till every heretic was exterminated from the earth. Very different, however, was the result of this message, from what the Duke had expected. 'We cannot be worse off than we are now,' exclaimed the people. 'We are justly punished for having banished our beloved pastors. Let us send for them back, and let us fight and die in their defence.'"

"Ah! that was right," said Charles. "Now I begin to like them again."

"Not only were the pastors recalled," continued Mrs. Grenville; "but a solemn meeting of all the different communities of the Vaudois people was immediately convened; and anything more solemn and imposing than this spectacle it would be impossible to imagine. It was the depth of winter; and from the large plateau, facing the mountains of Sestrières, where the people were assembled, nothing was visible but one great expanse of snow; and the calm moon, gliding through the deep blue of heaven, looked down upon a scene still and noiseless as the grave. Suddenly, amidst that assembled multitude a voice was heard, and the people knelt and listened in breathless silence, as the pastor pronounced the vow which was to be binding on them, and on their children's children. The words were few and simple, ending with the promise to maintain the Bible, whole and without admixture; 'we promise,' he concluded, 'to aid and succour our persecuted brethren, not regarding our individual interests, but the common cause; not relying upon men, but God.'"

"'We promise,' replied the people; and that promise arose to heaven from the multitude, as the voice of one man.'"

"O mamma!" said Ernest.

"It must have been grand," exclaimed Charles; "how I should like to have been there."

But Arthur said nothing. He looked very pale, and his eyes were full of tears.

"Again there was a moment's silence," continued Mrs. Grenville; "and then some voices were heard to exclaim—'To-morrow they require from us the abjuration of our faith. Well, to-morrow they shall see how the promise will be given.'"

"In a way the Romanists did not expect, did they, Aunt Helen?" said Charles.

"They did not, indeed," replied his aunt. "In order to make the recantation which was required from the Vaudois the more striking, the priests had adorned the Protestant Church with gorgeously decked images and altars."

"O I know, aunt," interrupted Charles. "I have often seen them; and they put garlands, and flowers, and all sorts of things; and dressed up dolls."

"Yes, exactly," said Mrs. Grenville. "Hardly had the morning dawned, when a large body of the confederates suddenly made their appearance in the village, and hastening to the church, proceeded to tear down all the decorations, which were broken into a thousand pieces, and thrown out into the street. One of their pastors, whose name was Humbert Artus, then ascended the pulpit, and taking his text from the words of Isaiah,

'Assemble yourselves, and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations; they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a God that cannot save.' He preached a most eloquent and glowing discourse, entreating the people to hold fast their faith, and trust to God for victory.

"Inspired by his words, and by the triumph which they had already achieved, the Vaudois determined to march to Villaro, where the monks, and those deputed by the pope to receive the submission of the Vaudois were assembled, awaiting the return of the troops whom they had sent to overawe any who should prove rebellious to their commands.

"The troops, who thought that this was a most easy and agreeable commission, were marching very leisurely along, when they suddenly found themselves opposed to the little band of the Reformers flushed with the excitement of victory."

"Perhaps they will make them march a little quicker," said Ernest, laughing.

"I hope it will be right about face," added Charles.

"Even more than that," continued Mrs. Grenville; "so vigorous was the Vaudois attack, that the troops found themselves quite unable to resist it, and in a very short time made a rapid retreat upon Villaro; the

Vaudois pursuing them with such unabated ardour, that the pope's council had hardly time to take refuge in the citadel before the Protestant's were in possession of the entire village."

"I should think the council was rather sorry it had sent to fetch the Vaudois," said Charles.

"The event certainly showed it was an unnecessary piece of politeness," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and you may be sure that the monks would have been extremely glad had the Vaudois shown as great a readiness to depart at their command, as they had already shown alacrity to accept their invitation to appear before them. But this was by no means their intention. Determined to improve their victory to the utmost, they laid regular siege to the fortress in which this turn of fortune had converted judges into prisoners."

"O now," said Mary, "they will see how they like being prisoners; perhaps it will make them kinder for the future."

"I wish it had taken such a happy effect," replied Mrs. Grenville. "It might have saved the Romish party from the commission of such awful crimes, as drew down upon their Church the abhorrence of Christendom. For the moment, however, the Protestants had decidedly the superiority. No sooner was it known that the Papist

party was besieged in Villaro, than the garrison of La Torre was sent to the rescue. The Vaudois, however, did not wait for their coming, but boldly advanced to meet them, and entirely defeated them on the plains of Teynan. A still stronger force was sent against them on the ensuing day, and met with a like disaster. It became evident that the Vaudois were not to be so lightly conquered, and greater efforts were made to relieve Villaro. But it was all of no use. In one day alone, the Vaudois dispersed three bodies of troops which had been sent against them, and maintained the blockade of the fortress with such vigour, that the garrison, being reduced to the last extremity, without provisions or ammunition, were obliged to surrender at discretion."

"O but the judges and the monks; what became of them, mamma?" enquired Arthur.

"They must all have shared the same fate," replied Mrs. Grenville, "as no one was allowed to leave Villaro during the siege; but their fears that the terms of the capitulation would not be honourably carried out, led them to make the strongest possible stipulation."

"What was that, mamma?"

"That they should be escorted by two of the Vaudois pastors, until they reached a place of safety."

"O fancy!" exclaimed Ernest; "and so they w

obliged to look for protection to those very men whom they had persecuted and oppressed."

"I hope they were not such fools as to act as their escort," said Charles.

"O Charles," interrupted Arthur, "do not say that; they would not have been Christians if they had refused. Would they, mamma?"

"No; and not only that," replied Mrs. Grenville, "but they would have lost the best possible opportunity of manifesting how utterly groundless were the accusations which their adversaries had brought against them; for, was it likely that men would have reposed entire confidence in those whom they knew to be devoid of every right principle and feeling. The Vaudois pastors proved well worthy of their trust; and the garrison of Villaro joined their compatriots in perfect safety. The fortress itself, however, did not escape so easily; that was entirely levelled with the ground."

"How surprised the Count de la Trinité must have been at these successes of the Vaudois," said Ernest.

"It must have been a great surprise to him at first," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but being a very able commander, he soon learned not to undervalue the powers of his enemy; and seeing how difficult it would be to conquer the Vaudois, as long as the different communities

remained true to each other, he determined to try a surer plan than force of arms."

"O mamma," said Arthur, "they are not going to let themselves be taken in again, are they?"

"If they are such fools," said Charles, "I give them up."

"Having posted his army," continued Mrs. Grenville, "in the most advantageous position he could obtain, he sent messages to the different villages, promising each that they should be perfectly safe under his protection, if only they would not assist the other."

"O the cunning man!" exclaimed Ernest.

"And then he will destroy them all one by one. O mamma!" added Arthur.

"Not so quickly, Arthur. The Vaudois had bought their experience so dearly, that it was hardly likely to be forgotten. They had ceased to put the slightest faith in the promises of any of the Romanist party. These advances of the Count de la Trinité, therefore, only made them doubly cautious; they renewed their vows of mutual defence, and from amongst the bravest of their young men, they selected a certain number, who went by the name of the 'Flying Company,' and whose duty it was to be present wherever the danger was greatest; or to be at the service of any portion of the community which should most need their protection."

"What fine, brave fellows," said Charles; "I should like to have been in that corps."

"O I should not," said Annie; "I should not like to be a soldier in time of war."

The little party could not help laughing at Annie's courageous notions of a soldier's duties.

"And yet after all, Annie," added Mrs. Grenville, many a person agrees with you, though they would not dare to express it so openly; so that you see there are greater cowards in the world than yourself."

"O Aunt Helen, that is too kind; she does not deserve it," said Charles.

"If we all had what we deserve, Charles," retorted Annie, angrily, "perhaps you would not be here to say so."

"Hush! hush!" said Mrs. Grenville, as she laid her hand upon Charles's arm, and checked the angry reply which she saw was rising to his lips.

"I am afraid you want the spirit, Annie," she added, gravely, "which inspired the Vaudois heroes with the courage which enabled them to triumph over every danger; and this spirit we may all attain by prayer."

"But little children cannot be heroes, mamma," said Mary.

"It depends on what you call a hero."

"O some one great and noble, mamma; some one who has conquered, and overcome great difficulties."

"'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.' Mrs. Grenville pronounced these words slowly and gently, and the flush which instantly coloured the cheeks both of Annie and Charles, showed that their meaning had not been lost upon them. Mrs. Grenville, however, took no notice, and continued: "I should be very sorry to lead you to suppose that there was anything very heroic in the little conquests of temper, or the little sacrifices of your personal convenience or pleasure, which it is in your own power every day to make, but I am most firmly convinced, that the foundation of a really noble and courageous nature must be laid in childhood by these very sacrifices of self; and I have no doubt that the child's earnest efforts to do right, are fully of as much account in the sight of God, as the noblest sacrifices which can afterwards be made by man."

"O mamma, that would be a nice happy thought," said Arthur. "Perhaps even I may be a hero! I had given up all hope of that."

As Mrs. Grenville looked at the pale cheeks and emaciated figure of the little boy now lying on the sofa by her side, it was with the greatest difficulty that she

could check the tears which were fast gathering in her eyes: with a strong effort, however, she conquered her her emotion, and replied cheerfully:—

"That you may, my darling. Even though you could never leave the sofa, you may have all the qualities of the noblest hero.

"'Nor deem, who to that bliss aspire
Must win their way through blood and fire;
The writhings of a wounded heart
Are fiercer than a foeman's dart.
Oft in life's stillest shade reclining,
In desolation unrepining,
Meek souls there are who little deem
Their daily strife an angel's theme,
Or that the rod they take so calm,
Shall prove in heaven the martyr's palm.'"

"O mamma," said Arthur, who had been listening intently, "what lovely lines; will you say them again?"

Mrs. Grenville repeated the words, and then continued: "But all this has taken us some way from the Vaudois, whom we left organising their flying company. Nothing could be more complete than the unity of spirit which prevailed amongst its members, for not only were they bound together by the ardent desire of defending their wives, their children, their homes, but even dearer than all, was the religion for which they were content to

sacrifice all things else. Each separate band of these brave men was accompanied by two pastors, whose duty it was to repress all irregularities, and morning and evening to unite with the troops in offering up their prayers to God, that He would be pleased to vouchsafe to them His blessing and protection.

"The great object of the Count de la Trinité was to obtain possession of the Pra del Tor, an extremely strong citadel, which would give him the command of all that portion of the Alps. But the Vaudois were not less alive to the importance of this post, and used their utmost exertions to fortify and to render it impregnable. The Count de la Trinité saw that no time was to be lost. He divided his army into three parts; and whilst two divisions were to march from different directions to the attack of the Pra del Tor, a third was to enter the valley of Angrogna, and, if possible, set fire to the village. Nothing could be better planned; but the battle is the Lord's, and he gives it to whom he will. Whether from the nature of the ground, or from some mistake in obeying their orders, the troops who took the route of the Col de la Vachera appeared before their companions; and the Vaudois were thus enabled to disperse them before the columns of the second detachment were seen approaching by the Col de Laourzoun. The Vaudois

quietly awaited their approach, and the long lines of the troops wound uninterruptedly through the defiles which led to Angrogna. At length, the village lay beneath their feet; and with a shout, 'Forward! forward! Angrogna is our own!' they rushed on, as they supposed, to certain victory.

"But then suddenly the defenders started from their ambuscades, and with loud shouts of 'Angrogna is not yours, but you are ours,' the invaders found themselves at once attacked in front, in rear, and on every side. Utterly bewildered and hemmed in, their courage gave way, and they no longer thought of attacking others, their only anxiety was to defend themselves, or at least to save their lives by a hasty and ignominious flight. Flight, however, would have availed them nothing, had it not been for the exertions of the Vaudois pastors, who threw themselves amongst their own troops, beseeching them to spare enemies who could no longer defend themselves, and to content themselves with the mere seizure of their arms and ammunition."

"Now, Aunt Helen, do you not think that was too generous," said Charles. "Would it not have been much better to put those men to death? Only think if the Vaudois had fallen into their hands; what would they have done?"

"That is not a very Christian rule, Charles."

"But do you not think, aunt, they deserved to be put to death?"

"I do not think that we must take the judgment in our own hands in that way, my love," replied Mrs. Grenville. "It is our duty to do what we know to be right, quite irrespectively of the actions of others. One great blessing of the reformed faith is, that it enlightens and Christianizes the world. It was the courage which comes from freedom and the love of God that gave the Vaudois their superiority over their adversaries. It is the same spirit which in the present day gives all Protestant states their predominance over those enchained by priestcraft, ignorance, and superstition."

"Well, at any rate," said Charles, "I hope the generosity of the Vaudois made the French ashamed of their barbarities."

"I am afraid not," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for the Count de la Trinité was so irritated by his defeat, that he wreaked his vengeance on the poor little unprotected village of Rora, which he burnt to the ground. The inhabitants, however, had fortunately time to escape to Villaro."

"There you see, aunt," exclaimed Charles, in a triumphant tone. "What good did all their kindness do them?"

"That question will be best answered, my love," replied his aunt, gently, "in the day when the dead 'shall be judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.'"

Charles blushed and was silent.

"In the meantime," continued Mrs. Grenville, "was it nothing that they could with a quiet conscience beseech God's blessing on their arms, knowing that to the utmost they had endeavoured to follow out the precepts of the Gospel? And they must have heeded this assurance the more, that the Count de la Trinité was preparing to make a still more vigorous attack upon their stronghold.

"In spite, however, of his utmost efforts, he could make no visible impression on the defences of the Pra del Tor, and his army was repulsed on every side, although not with so severe a loss as before. Finding it impossible to scale the heights, the Count next endeavoured to obtain possession of one of the hamlets in the villages, and attacked Boudrina with 2000 men. With this overwhelming force he seemed at first likely to be successful, when suddenly a detachment of the flying company falling on his rear, his victory was turned into a defeat, and he himself obliged to retreat with the greatest precipitancy."

"Hurrah!" said Ernest. "I like these flying companies."

"It was more than the Count de la Trinité did," continued his mother. "He was so annoyed by his repeated failures, that he drew off his army till he had recruited it to the amount of 7000 men; then thinking himself secure of victory, he once more renewed the attack. Most unfortunately the Vaudois had neglected to barricade an important pass, which led to the Pra del Tor."

"O mamma, how came they to make such a blunder?" said Ernest.

"It was such an extremely inaccessible post," replied Mrs. Grenville, "that I suppose they thought it a pity to expend their time and strength unnecessarily. It shows us that we do not always know our weak point; for by this very pass the Piedmontese army now approached Angrogna. It was on Sunday morning, the 17th March, 1561, that, as the Vaudois were quietly leaving their place of worship with their families, they perceived the advancing columns of the enemy winding through the mountain defiles."

"Mamma, mamma, you are wanted, if you please," said a well-known voice, as the drawing-room door opened, and Mr. Grenville appeared.

"O papa! O uncle! not just now. Mamma cannot go," exclaimed the children, in a variety of voices.

"Cannot she? I am afraid she must. Here is Uncle Arthur come to keep my birthday with us to-morrow."

And the announcement was speedily followed by the entrance of Uncle Arthur himself; and in their reception of their very kind play-fellow, even the advancing columns of the Piedmontese army were for the time forgotten.

CHAPTER IV.

NOTHING could be more beautiful than the birthday morning. Nature herself seemed anxious to join in the festival. The bright sunshine, the fresh green foliage, the merry twittering of the birds, all seemed glad and joyous, and in keeping with the children's ringing laughter, which, borne upon the pure soft air, was wafted up from the green slopes of the park below, and brought a momentary flush into the cheeks of the pale child lying on the sofa at the drawing-room window.

"Mamma, dear," he said gently, as he looked up at the instant, and saw his mother's deep glance of love; "never mind, I am quite happy. I like to hear them laugh."

"God bless you, my darling," said his mother, softly, as she moved towards his sofa, and kissed him affectionately, "and He does bless you, my darling, and makes you a blessing to all around you. Many a lesson you teach me of patience, my boy."

"O mamma," said Arthur, "those words are worth all the play. I really am happy now."

Mrs. Grenville's feelings, already overcome by the sad recollections which the day brought back to her, could not bear up against these gentle words. The tears rushed hotly to her eyes; but not willing that Arthur should see her emotion, she merely told him she wished to say one word to the children, and promising to return immediately, passed out on the terrace. She had not walked many steps, when she saw Ernest coming bounding up the grassy slopes towards her.

"Mamma, such fun," he began, and then suddenly checked himself as he saw the expression of his mother's face.

Mrs. Grenville tried to smile, but it would not do; and the quiet tears ran down her cheeks.

"Mamma, dear," said Ernest, as he put his hand within his mother's, "I am so sorry; how selfish I have been; and you—you are thinking of Harry. Indeed, indeed I have not forgotten him, mamma. I have been thinking of him so to-day, and how much better he played at cricket than I did, and what a help he would have been. O mamma, indeed, indeed, I wish Harry was with us."

"God's will be done, my boy," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Harry is happier now than it would have been in our

power to have made him. I *have* thought of the dead, but it is of the living that I am thinking now."

Ernest looked up thoughtfully into his mother's face. "What do you—O I know what you mean, mamma," exclaimed he suddenly. "Arthur—mamma—you think we are neglecting Arthur. But you said he was to lie still, that he might be rested to be with us just a little this afternoon."

"I said he was to lie still, but I did not say he was to be left quite alone, my love."

Ernest did not speak for a few moments. It was such a bright beautiful morning, and they were having such a capital game of football down in the park, and Uncle Arthur was coming to play with them.

He looked towards the tents. Yes, Uncle Arthur had evidently just joined the little party: that shout of laughter had welcomed him; and then Ernest looked away steadily, resolutely.

"Mamma," said he, "are you busy now?"

"Not particularly, my love."

"Could you go on with the Vaudois?"

"Would it be kind to go on without your cousins and sister?"

"But they may come too."

"But suppose they do not like to leave their game?"

"Well, but, mamma, they may have their choice. I do not pretend to say I should not like to hear the story, but I thought also it would be better for Arthur than if I were to go and sit alone with him. That would seem more as if I wanted to be thanked."

His mother's bright smile of pleasure well repaid Ernest for the sacrifice he had made, but he did not know the fervent prayer of thanksgiving that arose that moment from his mother's inmost heart, as she marked the struggle and the victory.

"Go, my boy," she said, quietly, "I will return into the drawing-room and wait for you."

Even more lightly than Ernest had ascended the slope did he now bound down its side, kicking to an inconceivable distance the ball which he arrested in its full career.

"That was a famous stroke," said Uncle Arthur, laughing.

"My first and last for the moment, uncle," replied Ernest. "I have come to ask my cousins and Mary to leave off playing, and come into the drawing-room, and mamma will go on about the Vaudois."

"O I do not want to hear anything about the Vaudois now," exclaimed Charles. "I am playing; I like that best."

"Yes; but," said Ernest, "Arthur is quite alone."

"No he is not, Mary is gone to sit with him," said Charles.

"And I am going too," said Ernest; "won't you come?"

"O do not be so stupid, you will break up our game," persisted Charles.

"Let us play presently," urged Ernest.

"Uncle Arthur will not be able to play presently," replied Charles, looking towards Mr. Montague.

Mr. Montague had particularly wished to see how the children would arrange their plans, and had, therefore, purposely taken no part in the discussion; now, however, when he was directly appealed to: he said kindly—

"O yes, Uncle Arthur will play presently; in fact, it will be more convenient to me. I will meet you here in an hour's time."

"There, Charles, is not that kind?"

"Very," said Charles, giving the ball a discontented kick; "but I had rather play now."

Ernest, however, had not waited for this last remark, he was in full charge up the slope; and Charles, seeing himself thus left in a minority, prepared slowly to follow his example.

"Here, Arthur," said Ernest, as he sprang in through

the drawing-room window, "mamma is going on with the Vaudois; will not that be jolly?"

"Very nice, indeed. I shall like that so much," said Arthur; "and Mary had come in to sit with me so kindly, that I am glad she will have something amusing also."

Ernest's face rather fell; of the two he had made the greatest sacrifice to come to Arthur, and Mary had got all the thanks. He was just on the point of saying that this was not quite fair, when, upon looking up and catching the expression of his mother's countenance, the recollection of his own words flashed back upon his mind, and with a strong effort he mastered his disappointment sufficiently to say, with a cheerful voice:

"Here, here comes Charles. Now we are all ready, mamma. Let us begin, please."

"You left off at such a very interesting place, mamma," said Arthur. "The invaders had just been discovered coming up the sides of the mountains."

"Strengthened by the act of prayer in which they had engaged," continued Mrs. Grenville, "the Vaudois prepared for their defence with the utmost calmness and resolution. A body of them posted themselves at a sharp turn of the road, and as the invaders ascended the mountains, they pushed them back with their long pikes

into the ravines below. At the same moment, a band of the flying company, which had ascended the hill by another route, attacked the Piedmontese troops in the rear, and completing the disorder already begun, the troops wavered, gave way, and at length fled precipitately; and so great was the disorder, that it is said, that the Count de la Trinité burst into a passion of tears at the sight of the slain. It was in vain he tried to rally his troops, and to induce them to renew the combat.

"'We cannot fight against these men,' they exclaimed; 'God is with them, and we are powerless.'

"And powerless they certainly would have been, had the Vaudois chosen to pursue their advantage; for at that moment, they could easily have destroyed the whole Piedmontese army. But as usual, the Vaudois were as moderate in the hour of victory, as brave in that of battle; and, contenting themselves with having dispersed the enemy, they again retreated, and ensconced themselves in their mountain homes.

"Untouched, however, by their generosity, the Count de la Trinité only thought of avenging his defeat. In despair of conquering them whilst the warfare was to be maintained amidst craggy precipices, his great desire was to tempt the Vaudois to risk an engagement on the open plains; thinking, then, that he was secure of victory.

He had forgotten that the same God could give victory in the valley as on the hill."

"O mamma, that is like the Jews in the time of Elijah," exclaimed Arthur.

"It is very like," replied Mrs. Grenville. "I might almost use the words of the Bible: 'Thus saith the Lord, because ye have said the Lord is God of the hills, but he is not the God of the valleys; therefore will I deliver this great multitude into thy hands, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.' For in a very few days the Count de la Trinité obtained his desire. A battle was fought, and his troops were again entirely defeated."

"I do not think that was exactly what he wished, Aunt Helen," said Charles, whose good humour was slowly returning as he became interested in the story.

"He was as much displeased as surprised," continued Mrs. Grenville; "and again had recourse to the old manœuvre of offering to negociate. Although the Vaudois doubted his sincerity, they were yet so anxious for peace, that they gladly listened to his treacherous propositions; and no sooner did he think that he had lulled them into security, than he despatched a fresh body of troops, hoping at last to surprise, and cut them to pieces. In some small villages they were unfortunately only too successful, and they mercilessly put all to death who

could not escape from their brutality by a hasty flight. The greater number of the Vaudois had learned, however, by this time, to mistrust all the fair promises of the Romanists, and had therefore taken the precaution not lay aside their arms. No sooner did they hear of this first breach of honour, than, enraged at the treachery, they renewed the war with greater daring and energy than before, not only repelling the invaders, but actually following them out into the open country, and pursuing them to the very gates of their fortress of La Torre. So complete was their victory, that on that very evening the Count de la Trinité raised his camp, and retreated in all haste to Cavour.

"A report was spread, that he was merely gone there to recruit his army, and return with cannon.

"'Let him bring them,' replied the Vaudois triumphantly; 'he will not take them back again.'"

"O what fun!" exclaimed Charles. "I hope he did not."

"He never tried," replied Mrs. Grenville. "His troops were so completely disheartened, that they not only deserted in large numbers, but spread everywhere the report of the horrors of the late campaign, declaring that the life of one Vaudois was bought at the price of a hundred Catholics; and the consequence was, that soldiers

could not be found willing to march on so terrible a service; and before the Count de la Trinité could get together another army, he himself was seized with a dreadful illness, and the Duke of Savoy was only too glad to find the Vaudois willing to treat for peace."

"And then they will only be deceived again, mamma," said Mary. "I cannot bear their being taken in so often."

"There must be something very wrong in a religion which can justify such deception," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for you must remember, that no Roman Catholic is bound to keep faith with a heretic, and, therefore, conduct which seems to us utterly heartless and without principle, may have resulted in their case from the love which they felt for, and the blind obedience which they paid to their Church."

"I am so glad that we are not Roman Catholics, mamma," said Ernest.

"It is, indeed, a cause for thankfulness," replied Mrs. Grenville; "only we must take very great care that we do not rest contented with the mere fact of being Protestants. Our lives must bear witness to the truth of our faith."

"And did the Vaudois make peace," enquired Arthur.

"Yes," replied his mother; "and, nominally, on most advantageous terms; for they were allowed the free exercise of their religion, and perfect liberty to come and go as they pleased, in the states of the Duke of Savoy. The greatest advantage, however, that they gained from the treaty was, that it could at all times be appealed to, and made the basis of future arrangements; for as to the present good which they derived from it, it was very small indeed, as excuses were never wanting to put aside its different clauses, whenever a good opportunity offered itself for persecuting any of the unfortunate Vaudois. The massacre of St. Bartholomew—"

"What was that, aunt?" interrupted Annie.

"O I know," said Ernest. "It was at Paris, was it not, mamma? And the King, and that cruel Catherine de Medicis, had assembled all the Protestants to be present at the marriage of the Prince of Navarre; and then, when no one was thinking of any harm, in the middle of the night, the soldiers fell upon the poor Protestants, and murdered them in their beds."

"O how shocking!" said Annie.

"It was most dreadful," replied Mrs. Grenville. "In fact, so dreadful that it defeated its own object; for even Roman Catholics shrank in horror from a religion which could justify such an unheard-of act of treachery and

cruelty; and the Duke of Savoy, when he was urged to make the good work complete, by cutting off in like manner the inhabitants of the Vaudois valleys, replied—"That one such crime was sufficient; and that his memory should never be stained by the association of his name with a deed of such unparalleled wickedness." And not content with this, he sent an especial message to the Vaudois, that they might remain in their homes with an entire feeling of security, as he would take care that they were not disturbed or injured; and thus, in the end, this fearful massacre was the means of affording a temporary respite to the Protestants of the Alps, and by enabling them to cultivate their lands, restored their valleys to some degree of prosperity.

"But not content with seeking to improve the state of their worldly affairs, they sought to make this time of tranquillity a means of promoting a knowledge of a purer faith."

"That was very stupid, I think," said Charles; "they will only get themselves into trouble, to do no good."

"Rather a cowardly motive, Master Charles," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and one on which Francis Guerin did not act when he started, quite alone, in the hope of winning over to the cause of truth the inhabitants of

Pramal, one of the most bigoted of the Roman Catholic villages."

"Ah, he will be put to death," said Mary with a sigh.

"It so happened that he arrived at Pramal," continued Mrs. Grenville, "on the Sunday morning, just as mass was on the point of being celebrated. Without taking any notice, he entered the church with the rest of the congregation, and joined in the service without any remark. No sooner, however, was it concluded, than rising he approached the officiating priest, and calmly asked if he had finished."

"'Yes!' returned the astonished curé.

"'What have you been doing?' was Guerin's next calm inquiry.

"'Celebrating mass.'

"'And what is 'mass'?'

"The curé was silent.

"Guerin, who had hitherto spoken in Latin, repeated the inquiry in French, as if he supposed that the priest's silence merely arose from having misunderstood the question.

"Still there was no reply. Guerin, without waiting any longer, ascended the pulpit:

"'See,' he exclaimed, 'here is a man who does he knoweth not what. How then can he explain it to you? He celebrates a mass, and knoweth not what a mass is. See here is a Bible. Will you listen to the words of God Himself?' And then opening the Scriptures, he preached such an eloquent and glowing discourse, that the people, who had never heard such words before, were fairly enraptured. They besought him to remain amongst them, that they might learn the truth from his lips; and the consequence was, that in a short time the priest was obliged to relinquish his charge, and Guerin became the pastor of Pramal."

"O that was a good end," said Mary.

"It was, and must have cheered them in the midst of all their troubles," continued Mrs. Grenville; "for at the best their position was a most trying one, exposed to every species of injustice and extortion. Just to give you an instance of what I mean. In 1620, the Romanists had so manifestly infringed the treaties by which they were bound, that the Vaudois remonstrated. The only answer of the Romanists was to seize and imprison the deputies, and a large sum of money had to be promised as their ransom, and to purchase a due observance of previous engagements. The valley of Luzerna advanced this money, supposing that the other valleys would pay

their share. The Romish party had, however, been busily at work, fostering a spirit of jealousy amongst the different Protestant communities; and the consequence unhappily was, that Perosa and San Martino refused to bear their portion of the general expense, alleging that they had had no part in the arrangements, and, therefore, could not be called upon to pay.

"This was the very decision to which the crafty priests had hoped they would arrive. 'Very well,' said they, 'you have no part in the arrangements; of course you cannot share in the advantages. Justice must take its course; you sent your deputies, you must pay for their ransom.'

"It was of no good to remonstrate, there was their own fatal admission; and not only had they to pay a much larger sum of money than would have been their original proportion, but a peremptory command was issued that six of their churches should be destroyed; and on their refusing to comply with an order so manifestly unjust, an army was immediately marched into their territories, ravaging and destroying without remorse or pity."

"Well, I am sorry for them," said Ernest; "but I think they deserved it, for they brought it on themselves."

"How sorry they must have been that they had done so wrong, mamma," said Arthur, "in giving way to jealousy."

"Yes! and how mad with themselves," added Charles, "that they had allowed themselves to be made such fools of."

"It is always easier to bear afflictions which we feel are sent by the hand of God," replied Mrs. Grenville, "than those trials which are the result of our own imprudence or bad conduct; and so the Vaudois had cause to acknowledge when the valleys were visited by a severe famine. The Romanists thought that this would be an admirable opportunity of establishing an authority over the Vaudois, which they found it impossible to obtain by force of arms. They, therefore, purchased a house, which they converted into a monastery of Franciscan friars; and lost no time in publishing abroad that they would distribute food gratuitously to any one who would come thither and attend mass. They never for a moment doubted of their success; but the Vaudois had had time to see their error, and to feel that their safety depended solely on their renunciation of all petty jealousies, and they therefore replied to the promises of the Franciscans by making common cause amongst themselves; those that were the most wealthy distributing bread daily to all who were in want."

"O I am glad of that," said Mary; "I was so afraid they would get beaten, if once they began to quarrel among themselves."

"There was one point, however," continued Mrs. Grenville, "which the Vaudois had quite overlooked. Having allowed the Franciscans to settle in their valley, it was by no means so easy to get rid of them again."

"Ah! I thought of that," said Charles, "and wondered why they let them buy that house."

"Finding that they could not induce the people to abjure their religion for the sake of food," continued Mrs. Grenville, "they next endeavoured to employ force, and oblige the inhabitants of the valleys to attend the daily mass. This was even a more hopeless scheme than the other, and so the Franciscans found to their cost."

"Why, what did they do, mamma?" inquired Ernest.

"You would guess a long while before you came to a a right conclusion, I think," replied Mrs. Grenville. "It being contrary to law that any man should lay hands upon an ecclesiastic, they had recourse to a most original plan for carrying out their purpose. On a given day, a large body of women assembled—"

"O Aunt Helen," interrupted Charles, laughing, "what a ridiculous army. I never should have guessed that the women were going to fight."

"The monks quite agreed with you," replied Mrs. Grenville, "and troubled themselves but very little with the fair company, whose approach I have no doubt only excited their merriment. But it was no laughing matter when the dames arrived at the gates of the monastery. They broke them open with the greatest ease; and making their way into the building, bore off the monks upon their backs, as easily as if they had been the mere bundles of wood which they were daily accustomed to carry."

"O mamma, what fun!" exclaimed Ernest.

"Would I not have kicked!" added Charles.

"Yes, I should not much have liked to have been your horse, Master Charlie," replied Mrs. Grenville, laughing. "The monks however, appear to have been too much astonished at the novelty of their situation to make much resistance. No sooner were they set at liberty, however, than they made a most angry appeal to the Count for justice against their fair enemies. The Vaudois defended themselves on the plea, that the conduct of the monks in endeavouring to insist on the attendance of the population at mass, was contrary to the existing treaties; and whether the Duke was afraid of exciting a fresh war amongst the Vaudois, or whether he was amused at the very original plan which they had adopted to rid themselves of their unwelcome guests,

certain it is that the Vaudois were for once triumphant, and the monks were obliged to relinquish all hopes of returning to their monastery."

"I should not think that they would be very sorry for that," said Annie. "They would never have felt safe."

"Oh, I think it was very kind," said Charles; "to provide them horses at the public expense, and it was more than they deserved."

"More formidable antagonists than even the monks, were however, destined now to try the faith of the unfortuate Vaudois," continued Mrs. Grenville. "The valleys were only just recovering from the effects of the famine, when a severe east wind of long continuance, blighted all the chestnut trees."

"But what particular harm would that do, mamma?" asked Mary; "except making the trees look brown and ugly."

"A great deal more harm than that," replied Mrs. Grenville; "since the fruit of the chesnut tree forms a great portion of the food of the inhabitants of the Alps."

"But they have regular dinners first, I suppose, mamma; have they not?" said Ernest.

"What you call a regular dinner would astonish a mountaineer, as much as his simple fare would astonish you," replied Mrs. Grenville, smiling. "He knows very

little of soups and fishes, and entrements,—and the thousand concoctions, on which our cooks pride themselves. A little dry bread—some chestnuts—a small portion of goat's milk cheese, a few grapes, perhaps, and a draught of milk, constitute a Vaudois feast."

"What would the people say, if they were to have no more for dinner to-day?" exclaimed Ernest. "How I wish the Vaudois could have had some of our roast-beef and plum-puddings."

"Such food would indeed have been welcome," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for the state to which the Vaudois were now reduced, was most distressing. It seemed bad enough that their bread and chesnuts were gone.—But at least their grapes were left. The vintage was just ready to be gathered in, when such a water-spout as had not been known for years, inundated the valleys,—and their last hope was swept away."

"O the poor Vaudois!" exclaimed Mary; "what will they do?"

"They sought for help; where help can alone be found," replied her mother. "A solemn assembly was held for prayer and fasting. Alas! of the many pastors then assembled; two only, were destined to survive the plague which now burst out amongst them."

"O more troubles!" said Arthur. "How sad!"

"Pestilence and famine, are almost invariably companions," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and to these evils was now added the horrors of war, for hostilities having commenced between France and Savoy, a French army was marched into the valleys of Piedmont. The plague was at that time raging in France; and, hoping to escape from its ravages in the purer air of Italy, hundreds joined the army destined for that service. But alas! instead of flying from the pestilence, they brought it in their train. And when the war was over, they left a worse enemy than themselves behind, in the shape of a dread disease; against the effects of which, the Vaudois in their present debilitated state, were utterly unable to cope. More than 12,000 persons died in the valleys,—and so rapid in its effects, was this fearful sickness, that a man might have left his home perfectly well, and be seized and fall dead in the road."

"Never were the words of Scripture more awfully verified. 'Where the tree falleth, there it shall lie.' For there were literally no living to bury the dead; and the highways were covered with bodies."

"Then those other words were fulfilled, mamma," said Mary; "'Let the dead bury their dead.'"

Ernest looked towards his mother; who, however, checking his smile, replied quietly, "Our Saviour did

not use the words exactly in that sense, my love, though I am glad to see you remember what you read, and try to apply it. Our Saviour only meant that when the selection had to be made between Himself and the world, we must consider that any duty, however sacred in its nature, and binding upon us at another time, must be cheerfully relinquished for the sake of Christ. And now the full beauty of His religion became manifest; volumes might be filled with the stories of the patience, gentleness, and resignation, with which the Vaudois met this overwhelming calamity. One after another, their pastors were taken from them, and still the remaining number only redoubled their exertions to supply the void, until at length of all their brotherhood, two only were left,—one of whom, Gilles, was quite an old man, and had already lost four sons in the pestilence."

"O mamma! what could such an old man do?" said Arthur, sorrowfully.

"God chooses his own instruments," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and often, those which would seem to us the most unlikely to succeed, that so His glory may be best promoted. It was so in the present case,—he bestowed on the venerable pastor such a double portion of his spirit, that he was able to undergo an amount of fatigue which was perfectly incredible. Not only did

he preach twice on every Sunday, and once on every week-day, but he passed through all the valleys, visiting every village in turn; praying with the sick,—consoling the bereaved, and sustaining the faint-hearted with the courage which animated himself, and which sprang from his sure trust in God."

"What a glorious old man!" said Ernest, "I hope he did not die, mamma."

"No! God mercifully allowed him to see comparative prosperity restored to his beloved valleys, before he called him home to receive his recompense; and if, as I used to think when I was a child, the stars are the saint's coronets of glory, a very bright one must I am sure, be Gilles' crown."

"O Aunt Helen!" said Charles, "What a pretty notion, did you think that?"

"Yes, I was always speculating on what the stars might be," replied his Aunt; "but here comes some one, who will perhaps put a more profitable speculation into your heads," she added, as uncle Arthur at that moment entered the room.

"Now, mamma, can you spare the boys," he asked cheerily.

"O thank you, mamma, for telling us so much," said Arthur; "and thank you all for coming in. I have had such a happy morning."

"And I am going to show you that I have learned something too, from Aunt Helen's story," said Charles, jumping up; "look here, Arthur, put your arms round my neck. I am going to storm the monastery. See, Aunt Helen, I am as good as an old woman any day, and Arthur is not half as heavy as a monk," he added, laughing as he ran off with the delicate-looking child, in a species of pic-a-back.

"Charles! Charles! what are you doing?" exclaimed Mrs. Grenville, in a half frightened tone.

"I am only going to take Arthur down to the tents, Aunt," replied Charles; stopping short, "just to look at them. He is quite safe, Aunt, he is, indeed! he is as light as a feather." Mrs. Grenville smiled, and Charles carried off his prize in triumph.

CHAPTER V.

FOR the few next days, Mrs. Grenville was too much occupied with visitors staying in the house, to be able to be much with the children; but the first afternoon that she was again alone, even Charles joined, as anxiously as the others, in the request that she would go on with her story of the Vaudois.

"And you see, Aunt Helen, it is not lost upon us," he urged, laughingly; "for I have got a ride in consequence."

"How was that?" enquired Mrs. Grenville.

"Why, we were playing at Vaudois chiefs, and we made the girls attack the monastery, and Mary carried me off on her shoulders as bravely as if she had been the wife of a mountaineer."

"I am sure I hope she did not," said Mrs. Grenville, rather gravely, "for you must have been very much too heavy for her."

"O only pretence, mamma," said Mary. "Charles

put his legs over my shoulders, but he ran along himself upon the ground."

"A very elegant attitude, certainly," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and a very obliging monk he must have been. I dare say the Vaudois women would have been glad if their captives had been half so accommodating. I hope, however, you mean to draw some more profitable lessons than this from what you hear."

"O yes, aunt," said Charles, nodding his head as he spoke with well assumed gravity. "You go on, and you shall see what we will do."

"Well, then, I hope I shall see, in the first place," replied Mrs. Grenville, laughing, "that you leave off making those most ridiculous grimaces; for I am quite sure that neither you, nor your cousins, will attend to one word whilst this absurd exhibition is going on."

"There, Aunt Helen; there," said Charles, as he placed himself on a stool at her feet; "now I am quite quiet; and I will be as good,—as good,—as you."

"That is saying a great deal!" said Ernest.

"Steady, steady!" said Mrs. Grenville; and after a moment's pause she continued: "I think I left off when the inhabitants of the valleys were just recovering the effects of the famine and pestilence to which they had been exposed."

"Yes, mamma," said Arthur, "Gilles was just dead."

"And well for him he was," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for in 1655 took place the most fearful persecution to which the Vaudois had ever yet been exposed. Unfortunately for the Reformed Church, the Duke of Savoy had married Christine, daughter of Mary de Medicis, who inherited the proud and haughty spirit of her family, and their undying hatred of the Reformed faith. Notwithstanding all her exertions, it was some time, however, before she could induce her husband to unite with her in the desire of exterminating the heretics of the valleys; but, alas! when once his consent was obtained, she found only too ready an agent for putting her bloody plans into execution. It had so happened, that a lady of great wealth and influence, named Pianeza, had sought, by various acts of self-inflicted penance, to atone in advanced life, for a youth spent in the indulgence of every sinful passion. On her death-bed, however, she felt how utterly worthless were all these penances to bring comfort to her soul. In her agony, and as a last resource, she besought her husband to make a solemn vow by her death-bed, that he would dedicate the rest of his life to the conversion of the heretic Vaudois; and to make the keeping of the vow doubly sure, she left a certain sum of money, which was not to be paid until the deed was accomplished."

"Aunt Helen!" said Charles, looking up, "who is making fun now?"

Mrs. Grenville smiled, and continued—"The Marquis de Pianeza being a soldier, and no divine, naturally thought, that the easiest way of converting the heretics was to persuade them by means of fire and sword; and, therefore, when the command of the invading army was offered him, he gladly accepted the post. The first intimation which the Vaudois received of the coming storm, was in an order which commanded that the rites of the Roman Catholic religion should be celebrated in all the valleys, and the Protestants were forbidden from interfering whilst this was going on. The Vaudois remonstrated. The Count refused to receive their remonstrances except from the lips of a Roman Catholic attorney. The attorney was sent. Still it would not do. Deputies must come from the different communities. The deputies appeared. Still a fresh delay. These deputies must have unlimited powers. These were granted; and now they were told they were to go to the palace of the Marquis of Pianeza, and they should receive their answer. Punctual to the time, they made their appearance. The Marquis could not see them, they must come later in the day. Again they obeyed, but only to meet with a fresh disappointment. Again they waited; and then were

told that no answer could be given for two days more. In all good faith they waited on; and, meanwhile, the Marquis of Pianeza had secretly left Turin, and was leading his troops into the valleys, where, totally unprepared for defence, the Vaudois were awaiting the return of the deputies."

"O mamma! O aunt!" exclaimed the children, "what awful, horrible treachery."

"O mamma! will God let it succeed," said Arthur.

"My love," replied his mother, gently, "it is not for us to call in question God's dealings with His people. Hath not the potter power over the clay? If we could be in heaven at this moment, we should certainly find that of all the noble army of martyrs, there is not one who does not rejoice that he was thought worthy to be enrolled amidst the hosts of Christ."

"O mamma, yes, I know that; but it does seem so very sad," said Arthur, whilst his eyes quite filled with tears.

"It is, indeed, most sad," replied Mrs. Grenville, "that the holy name of God should be profaned, and made the watchword for the crimes of men; and those who daily pray, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,' should be the very men *who most hinder*, by their actions, so blessed a consummation."

"Well but, aunt," said Charles, rather impatiently, "did they murder all the Vaudois when they were unprepared to defend themselves."

"It was bad enough, but not quite so bad as that," continued Mrs. Grenville. "The Vaudois could not but imagine that some imminent danger threatened them, when, instead of the return of their deputies, a large army was marched into their valleys. They, therefore, prepared immediately to defend themselves, in the event of their being attacked. The Marquis lost no time in commencing hostilities, and the Vaudois were obliged, as usual, to take refuge amongst their mountain fastnesses, from whence the Marquis found it as impossible to dislodge them as his predecessors had found it in ancient times. He determined, therefore, not to sacrifice the lives of his men in useless warfare, but to have recourse at once to negociation and duplicity."

"I declare, mamma," exclaimed Ernest, "I give the Vaudois up, if they allow themselves to be deceived again. I have no patience with them. It goes on time after time."

"I wonder what you would say to us, aunt," added Charles, "if we never learned better lessons by experience."

"I could only hope you would be able to bring

forward as good reasons for your stupidity, as the Vaudois could," replied Mrs. Grenville. "They had always been taught that one of the first necessities of their religion was to forgive their enemies, and to do good to those who hated them; and they never ceased to hope that if they imitated the conduct of their Saviour, their opponents might in the end be won over to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ."

"Poor things!" said Mary, with a sigh.

"The first care of the Marquis of Pianeza," continued Mrs. Grenville, "was to invite deputies from the different communities to come and pay him a friendly visit; and, after having entertained them most hospitably, he represented to them, that all the enormities of which his soldiers had been guilty, had been committed without his knowledge, and contrary to his express commands.

"'Now,' he added, 'the Duke wishes to make trial of your loyalty, and he has need of his troops in these provinces. If each one of your communes will receive and support a regiment it will be an unanswerable proof of your devotion, and will put to silence the slanders of those who represent you as rebels, only anxious to throw off your allegiance to him.'

"'If that is all we will do it,' replied the Vaudois; *and overwhelmed* with kind words and gracious pro-

mises, the deputies returned to their various communes to see that their engagement was put into execution.

"The announcement was received with tranquillity by the great majority of the people; but two of their chiefs, Gianavello and Leger, who were noted for their noble and generous characters, most strenuously opposed it, declaring that they felt sure that there was some hidden act of treachery concealed beneath a fair outside. Alas! no one listened to their remonstrance."

"O mamma," said Mary, "what is coming?"

"Nothing could be more skilful and secret than the organization of the Marquis' plan," continued Mrs. Grenville. "The troops were marched to their respective places of destination, and billeted on the different houses."

"What was that, mamma?" inquired Mary.

"In times of war, my love," replied Mrs. Grenville, "it is often difficult to provide for the soldiers; and thus, when an army enters a habitable district, each family is obliged to receive a certain number of men, to lodge and feed them. These men receive a ticket, which in in French is called a *billet*, with their place of destination marked upon it, and from this name the plan has been called billeting an army.

"Nothing could be outwardly more kindly than the

manner of the Piedmontese troops when they took up their abode in the homes of the Vaudois, and after an evening spent in the interchange of all sorts of friendly courtesies, they quietly retired to rest. But at midnight there was a great cry heard. In the length and breadth of the valleys one general massacre had commenced; none were spared; old and young, men, women, and children, all on whom the assassins could lay hands, shared in one common fate."

The children looked towards Mrs. Grenville; they seemed too shocked to speak.

"No death seemed cruel or horrible enough to gratify the barbarous murderers," continued Mrs. Grenville. "So utterly horrible were the tortures they invented, that it would be impossible to describe them to you—they far more than realised the apostle's description:

"'They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts, in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.'

"At midnight, the bells of St. Germaine and Auxerrois had pealed forth the signal, and morning dawned on burning villages and valleys running red with blood. It

was Easter Sunday, and this was the sacrifice chosen as well pleasing to the Lord."

"O mamma!" "O aunt!"

"The Roman Catholic Church," continued Mrs. Grenville, "lost no time in celebrating her victory with Te Deums and hymns of praise; but, as of old, the voice of God was heard: 'Bring no more vain oblations. Incense is an abomination to me. The calling of assemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.' For the sound of the Te Deums was lost in the shout of execration which arose from every side. I can use no words of my own at all equal to those of our English ambassador, Sir Samuel Morland, who, after a most eloquent remonstrance to the Duke and Duchess of Savoy, ended by saying:

"'If all the tyrants of all times and ages were alive again, they would doubtless be ashamed to find that nothing so barbarous and inhuman as this deed had ever been invented by them. In the meantime, the angels are stricken with horror! Men are dizzy with amazement; Heaven itself appears astonished by the cries of the dying, and the very earth to blush with the blood of so many innocent persons.'"

"He must have been a brave man," said Ernest, "to dare to say so much to the Duke."

"O mamma, what must the Duke have felt," added Mary. "I do not know what I should have done if any one had said so to me."

"But, Mary," said Arthur, "it was worse to have been guilty of the action."

"Quite right, my boy," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"Aunt Helen, were all the Vaudois killed?" asked Charles.

"No; some few escaped," replied Mrs. Grenville; "fortunately, amongst the number, the brave Gianavello. But before I tell you about their adventures, go into the library, Ernest, and bring me the volume of Milton, which contains the sonnets. I should like to read you a most beautiful one which he wrote at the time of this awful massacre. Thank you, my love," she added, as Ernest returned almost immediately with the book; and opening it, she read the following lines to the children.

"Avenge, O Lord! Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold:
E'en them who kept Thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in Thy book record their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in the ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piémontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. The moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow

O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant: that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learnt Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe."

"O that is very beautiful," said Ernest; "read it once more, mamma."

Mrs. Grenville complied with this request.

"And now for Gianavello and his adventures, aunt," said Charles, who liked the story better than the poetry.

"There was but one place," continued his aunt, "into which the troops had not been admitted, and this was Rora. Not that it was the intention of the Marquis to spare such an important post, but simply that by sending a large force against it, he wished to make assurance doubly sure. This one omission was, by God's blessing, made the means of preserving alive some small remnant of the unfortunate Vaudois.

"Early on the morning of the fatal 24th of April, Gianavello, whom you may remember had never put any faith in the promises of the Marquis, and who was, therefore, constantly on the watch, perceived a body of 500 or 600 soldiers stealthily advancing with all speed towards Rora. Instantly taking alarm, he determined to proceed thither himself by another route. On his way he was fortunately able to summon six of his compatriots

to his assistance, all brave, daring spirits like his own. These men he posted at intervals at points commanding the pass up which the soldiers were advancing. Calmly, noiselessly they waited their approach. No sooner were they within shot, however, than first one, then another, discharged their muskets; and so well were these shots directed, that seven of the enemy at once fell dead."

"O if they had but had some Colt's revolvers, Aunt Helen!" exclaimed Charles, "would not that have been jolly?"

"But very few of the enemy would in that case have returned to tell the tale," rejoined Mrs. Grenville, smiling in spite of herself at Charles' enthusiasm; "as it was, the troops were considerably startled. Who had betrayed them? How many men were lying in ambuscade? They advanced more slowly—a fresh discharge, in which every shot again told, made them waver. Again and again the discharge poured in amongst them. They could not tell from whence the fire came, nor the number of their concealed enemies. At length, overpowered by terror, they turned and fled precipitately, Gianavello and his companions following unseen, and pouring a terrible discharge into their flying ranks."

"What famous fellows!" said Ernest.

"*On the* following day," continued Mrs. Grenville,

"the Marquis, not in the least discouraged, sent a still larger body of men in the hopes of taking Rora. Gianavello's little band now numbered sixteen."

"Sixteen, mamma! against some hundreds," said Arthur.

"Gianavello posted his men with his usual skill," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and as the troops were not the least aware of the number of their opponents, they fancied themselves engaged with a large body of the Vaudois. When, therefore, the army entered the defile, and at the first fire from the enemy, one officer and ten men fell to the ground, the soldiers, already half beaten, by fear, and by the recollection of the past, fell instantly into disorder, and with loud cries of 'All is lost—save yourselves!' they faced round in a disgraceful and precipitate retreat. Gianavello and his companions, who knew every turn of the mountain path, and were as active and agile as chamois, bounded from rock to rock in pursuit, a course of action which so astonished the troops, who found an enemy on the borders of every precipice, that imagining themselves surrounded on all sides, they never thought of defending themselves, and before they could make good their retreat, they had lost fifty-two of their men."

"Only fifty-two!" said Charles in a tone of disappointment.

"Well, I think that was a tolerable number," replied Mrs. Grenville. "What would you have had?"

"O I should have liked them all to be killed, aunt."

Mrs. Grenville looked grave.

"What is the matter, mamma?" said Arthur; "would not you have liked all the soldiers to be destroyed?"

"My sympathy is entirely as yours is, with the Vaudois," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but I was thinking how very, very dreadful war is in its results; far more dreadful even from the bad passions which it excites, than from the actual misery which it entails upon a nation. How awful to think that a Christian can find matter of rejoicing in the fact, that hundreds of souls are at once hurried, without one instant's time for reflection, into the presence of an Almighty Judge."

"O but I was not thinking of that, aunt," said Charles; "I was only thinking of the Vaudois."

"I know you were, my love, and what you said was quite natural," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but that does not make it the less sad. The Marquis meanwhile, dreading a third defeat, had recourse to his old arts of dissimulation, marching at the same moment a still larger body of soldiers on the devoted town. But Gianavello was not to be so easily deceived. Despairing of being *able to defend* Rora for long against such an overwhelm-

ing force of the enemy, he profited by the short interval of negociations to make the Vaudois families take refuge in the mountains, whilst he and his sixteen companions posted themselves on the path by which they thought the troops would be most likely to pass.

" The soldiers had been very much surprised to find the way open to them, and still more astonished to see Rora entirely deserted by its inhabitants. Charmed with their easy victory, and laden with plunder, they were returning triumphantly to their quarters, when suddenly—"

" O I know!" exclaimed Ernest and Charles in a breath; " the Vaudois, mamma, the Vaudois."

" From their carefully chosen position a murderous, fire poured down upon the soldiery, who, eager to preserve their booty, turned, and changing their route, took the road towards Villaro. Gianavello instantly perceived the manœuvre, and hastening by a short cut quite unknown to the enemy, had time to post his men most advantageously before the troops, who, imagining they had entirely escaped the Vaudois, made their appearance laden with booty, and maintaining no sort of discipline. Once again the discharge poured in upon them. Without stopping to defend themselves, the soldiers only hastened on the more with their plunder; and by so doing, arrived

at a steep mountain path, bordering a fearful precipice. This Gianavello had foreseen, and prepared accordingly. Great stones and fragments of rocks were instantly set in motion, and rolling down upon the troops, crushed some of them, and threw others down the precipices. At the same instant, Gianavello and his men sprang out from their place of concealment, and attacking the enemy, they fled, leaving all their plunder in their haste to get away. Gianavello and his men then retreated towards the higher ground; and the instant they attained this place of safety, 'Let us,' said their noble leader, 'render thanks where thanks alone are due.' The little band knelt instantly, and Gianavello offered up a short but fervent and heartfelt prayer and thanksgiving to the Lord."

"How angry the Marquis must have been at this fresh defeat," said Ernest.

"Yes, I think it will be some time before he gets his money," added Charles.

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Grenville.

"Why, his wife's legacy, aunt."

Mrs. Grenville laughed. "Once again," she continued, "a fresh armament was raised; and the command of it was given to one of the most ardent persecutors of the Vaudois, named Mario di Bagnolo, who had already *greatly distinguished* himself at the time of the massacre,

and who now claimed the glory of destroying 'the miserable handful of adventurers,' as he termed Gianavello and his companions."

"Umph! umph!" said Charles. "It will be very doubtful whether the miserable handful of adventurers will not destroy him, I think."

"Mario divided his army into two portions, directing them to advance on Rora from two opposite directions. Gianavello had entrenched himself and company, which now amounted to between twenty and thirty men, amongst the same rocks from whence he had gained his first victory; to this point, therefore, Mario advanced in safety. Gianavello was just on the point of firing on his advancing columns, when he perceived that fresh troops, which had gained the height above him, were preparing to attack him in the rear."

"O mamma!" exclaimed Arthur, "it is the other division of Mario's army."

"Exactly; But Gianavello lost not an instant; with the promptitude of genius, he saw where the real peril lay; and leaving Mario to continue his toilsome ascent. 'To the summit!' he shouted, 'to the summit!'"

"But, mamma, how could they get there?" said Ernest; "with the soldiers in the way."

"Fortunately," replied Mrs. Grenville; "the troops

were on the point of turning a corner of the ascent, when Gianavello perceived them. He directed his men to take steady aim, and fire all at once; and then, instantly throw themselves down flat on their faces. The soldiers, who were not prepared for either manœuvre, suffered greatly,—whilst their shots passed harmlessly over the recumbent bodies of the Vaudois. No sooner was the volley fired, than the Vaudois, profiting by the smoke and confusion, sprang to their feet, and sword in hand cut their way, straight through the opposing forces.—And almost in less time than it takes me to tell you, gained the topmost pass; from which, they might in safety defy the utmost efforts of the enemy."

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Charles.

"By this time, the two detachments had joined," continued Mrs. Grenville; "and advanced together to dislodge the enemy."

"Easier said, than done," added Charles.

"Charles, Charles! do not interrupt mamma," said Ernest; "it is so provoking."

"Hush! Ernest, hush!" said Mrs. Grenville, "as Charles observes, it was considerably easier said than done; for no sooner did the columns advance to a certain point, than they found themselves exposed to a raking fire from *above;* whilst they themselves, could as usual, do no

harm whatever to their unseen opponents. Besides, what with looking upwards towards their foes, and what with the nature of the ground on which they stood, they became perfectly giddy; and at last, frightened and disheartened, they turned and fled leaving sixty-five of their men dead upon the ground, besides numbers of wounded and dying whom they carried off with them. The Vaudois elated by their success, were anxious to pursue them into the plains below."

"'No! no,' said Gianavello. 'See, this is how we shall attain a much greater measure of success.' And leading his intrepid followers by a short cut, he again posted them above the defile by which the Piedmontese army was retreating."

"They had not long to wait: the troops, breathless with their flight, and thinking that at last they had fairly distanced the foe, entered the pass in haste and careless disorder; then the fatal fire opened, whilst huge pieces of rock and stone, more destructive still, bounded down from crag to crag, crushing everything beneath them, with their awful impetus. Resistance was out of the question, flight, and self-preservation were their only thoughts. Some tried to let themselves down the precipices by the aid of ropes; others to scramble down supported by stumps of trees, and clinging to the rocks.

But such a descent, perilous at all times, was rendered desperate by the terror and agitation of the men; and nearly the whole of Mario's fine army, perished in that fearful day."

"It was quite like a judgment of God, was it not, mamma?" said Arthur.

"When we think of the dreadful atrocities which had been committed by these very men," replied Mrs. Grenville, "it is indeed difficult, not to remember those solemn words, 'What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground.' At any rate, we must feel that nothing but the power of God could have inspired the Vaudois with either the energy, or the ability, to achieve so signal a victory. And to God alone, did they ascribe the glory."

"The Marquis meanwhile, was, as you may easily imagine, more exasperated than ever, at the defeat of his army: and raising a force of no less than ten thousand men, he marched once more to attack Rora. To attempt its defence with fifty or sixty men, against such overwhelming numbers, was of course impossible; and the Marquis of Pianeza, enjoyed at last the somewhat questionable glory, of taking possession of the deserted own, and massacring or carrying away prisoners, such *of the inhabitants* as had not been able to escape. But

alas! amongst this latter number, were the wife and daughters of Gianavello."

"O mamma, mamma!" said Mary.

"The first tidings which reached Gianavello, of this sad disaster," continued Mrs. Grenville, "were in a letter which the brave general received on the following day from the Marquis, and in which he bid him surrender at once, and abjure his faith; otherwise, his wife and daughters should be burnt alive. 'If you do not at once comply with these commands,' added Pianeza, 'I shall not trouble myself to send more troops after you, but put at once a price on your head; and if you fall alive into my hands, be sure that there are no torments so cruel, but that you shall undergo them.'"

"O mamma! what did they do to him?" exclaimed Mary.

"Do to him?" repeated Ernest; "why nothing, you do not suppose he will consent?"

"Gianavello, never hesitated," continued Mrs. Grenville; "the messenger who brought the letter, took back the reply."

"'There is no torment,' said the brave man; "so cruel, that I should not prefer it to the abjuration of my faith; as to my wife and children, they well know how dear they are to me; but God alone is master of their

lives, and if you make their bodies perish, he will save their souls alive. May He receive them into His grace; them and me, if it befall me to come into your hands.'"

"What a noble fellow!" said Charles.

"O I knew what he would say," added Ernest.

"But what became of his wife and children, mamma?" enquired Arthur.

"You must wait till I can go on with the story," replied Mrs. Grenville; "There is the dinner-bell ringing, and I have not even begun to get ready."

"Oh oh!" said the children in different tones of disgust; but before the last oh was uttered, Mrs. Grenville had left the room.

CHAPTER VI.

FOR the next few days, the children waited most impatiently for Mrs. Grenville to say that she was at liberty to go on with the story; but it so happened, that Mr. Grenville was very busy making alterations in the grounds, and required that Mrs. Grenville should be constantly with him, and she therefore had no time to devote to the children. At length, however, to their no small satisfaction, a thoroughly wet afternoon prevented all possibility of out-door occupation.

The children made their appearance in a body at the drawing-room door.

"Mamma," said Ernest, "can you devote yourself to us this afternoon instead of to the rhododendrons?"

"O I am sure by Aunt Helen's face she can," exclaimed Charles, springing into the room. "You will go on with your story, will you not, aunt?"

"And tell us, mamma," added Arthur, "what became of Gianavello's wife and daughters."

"It will be easier to gratify the first part of your request than the latter," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But I am quite at leisure now, and shall be most happy to go on with the story."

The children lost no time in settling themselves in their usual places; and then Arthur, looking up in his mother's face, said in rather a disappointed tone:

"But, mamma, why cannot you tell us about Gianavello's family. I have been wanting so much to know."

"Because, in the first place," replied Mrs. Grenville, "it would forestall the interest of my story; and in the second, I am not quite sure that I know myself."

"O mamma," said Arthur, laughing, "that is too bad of you."

"One of his children, however," continued Mrs. Grenville," had escaped the sad fate of the rest of the family; and Gianavello, fearing lest he too might fall into the power of the enemy, accompanied him himself into Dauphiny, where, having placed the little boy in safe custody, he rejoined his brave companions, and took refuge with them amongst the most inaccessible of the mountain fastnesses.

"Meanwhile, the accounts of the awful massacre of the Vaudois had spread far and wide, and had, as I have already told you, excited the commiseration of all the

European courts, more especially those holding the doctrines of the reformed faith. In England, more especially, the feelings of horror and indignation were universal."

"O yes, mamma; I remember," said Ernest, "those bold words of Sir Samuel Morland."

"But not content with mere words," continued Mrs. Grenville, "Cromwell immediately authorised a collection being made for the relief of such of the Vaudois as might have escaped the general massacre; and so generously was this appeal responded to, that no less than £38,241 was immediately collected, a sum equivalent to three times the amount in the present day."

"O how glad the poor Vaudois must have been," said Mary.

"Unfortunately, however," replied Mrs. Grenville, "Cromwell did not live long enough to see that this noble donation was appropriated to the use for which it was intended. £22,000 only reached the Vaudois; the rest was spent by Charles II. upon his own guilty pleasures."

"O mamma!" exclaimed Ernest, indignantly, "how dared he commit such a robbery?"

"It is, indeed, sad to think," replied Mrs. Grenville, "that one most bound by his high station to uphold justice and protect the innocent, should have been the first

to sacrifice those it was his sacred duty, as well as best interest to defend. But, however, this did not happen at the time of which I am now speaking, and we must go back to Gianavello and his companions, in whose favour Cromwell's bold remonstrance produced a decided reaction. It was the interest both of France and Spain to stand well with the Protector; therefore a species of neutrality was obtained for the Vaudois, and even permission granted by Mazarin to such of the French Swiss Protestants as liked to join the little army under the command of Gianavello. A considerable number profited by his permission; amongst whom was Giaheri, a brave and noble man, who, at the head of a little band of exiles, joined his forces to those of the great Vaudois commander on the 27th of May, 1655."

"Ah! now we shall have some more fighting," exclaimed Charles. "I always like that; it is fine fun."

"I shall like it better," said Arthur, "now that Gianavello has more men. I always felt so afraid before, that he would be taken prisoner."

"One of the first points which they felt essential to their success," continued Mrs. Grenville, "was to give the enemy a notion of their power; and for this reason they determined to make the war offensive as well as *defensive*."

"What do you mean, mamma?" asked Mary.

"O I can tell you that," replied Ernest. "Offensive would be if they attacked the enemy; defensive, if they only defended themselves."

"Exactly," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Their first attempt, however, was not a fortunate one. They hoped to surprise Garsigliano; but a rumour of their intention spreading, so large a body of troops assembled, that the Vaudois saw at once that success was impossible, and retreated, carrying off some cattle with them. Nothing daunted by this failure, they next planned an attack on San Segonzo, but joined first in earnest prayer to God that He would be pleased to bless their endeavours.

"It required a bold and daring spirit to carry out the enterprise which the Vaudois commanders had now conceived; for with their comparatively small force, they were to attack a strongly fortified and well armed town, garrisoned by at least fourteen hundred men.

"In order to protect his men as much as possible from the fire of the besieged, Gianavello had provided them with great bags filled with hay, which they rolled on before them as they advanced to the attack."

"O how odd they must have looked!" exclaimed the children, laughing.

"Fancy," added Charles, "seeing these great bundles, *bounce, bounce*, bounce!"

"They proved the most valuable defence," continued Mrs. Grenville, when the children were again quiet, "which could possibly have been provided, for the enemy's bullets buried themselves amongst the hay, without doing the slightest harm to the besiegers."

"I dare say they did more harm to the cattle afterwards," said Charles. "I am sure when I have been eating a piece of cake at home, and have come to ever such a little bit of stone, it has nearly broken my teeth to atoms. I do not know what a cow would say to a bullet."

"O Charles, do not be stupid," said Ernest, rather crossly. "Go on, mamma, dear; I want to know what they did."

"As soon as they were well under the walls of the town," continued Mrs. Grenville, "they set fire to the hay, which instantly rose in such thick columns of smoke, that it completely concealed the Vaudois from the troops who manned the walls, and enabled them unperceived to make a vigorous attack upon one of the gates, which, yielding to the pressure, gave way, and the whole band of the Vaudois rushed in with such impetuous courage, that they carried all before them, and were soon masters of the town, although not before 1,400 of its defenders had perished, whilst the Vaudois, on their part, lost but *seven of their* men."

"O how wonderful!" exclaimed Ernest. "It hardly seems possible."

"It does seem incredible," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but it is quite true, nevertheless. When it became known to the country round, it produced as decided an effect in favour of the Vaudois, as if they had gained some great pitched battle. It was in vain for the Marquis of Pianeza to put a price upon the heads of the brave Vaudois leaders. People no longer looked upon them as rebels who could be easily hunted down, but as great warriors, with whom it was much more their interest to treat for an honourable peace. And this was the very point to which Gianavello had wished that they should arrive. Hoping to improve his advantage, he next attempted to obtain possession of Bricherasio. Here, however, the troops were too powerful for him, and he was obliged to retreat, though not before the enemy had suffered severely.

"Nor was he more successful in his attempt to recover La Torre. Although there again the Piedmontese lost three hundred men, without being able to inflict any material injury on their assailants.

"Meanwhile, provisions began to run short in the Vaudois camp, and in order to supply the deficiency, Giaheri determined to make an inroad on Crussolo,

place which had signalised itself greatly by its cruelties at the time of the massacre. The people fled in alarm to a great cavern in the neighbourhood, and Giaheri, without attempting to pursue them, contented himself with driving off 400 cattle and 600 sheep, which, when divided amongst the Vaudois, made a famous prize for them all.

"In spite, however, of the moderation which they displayed towards the inhabitants of the villages which they attacked, the Vaudois leaders inspired the whole surrounding country with unbounded terror; and the Marquis de Pianeza, hoping to tranquillise the people, determined to make one more vigorous effort to subdue and take prisoners Gianavello and his comrades. Disposing his army into four divisions, he marched against them, hoping to surround them, and cut them off from all hopes of retreat. Owing, however, to the difficulties of the way, the four divisions of his army found it impossible to reunite at the same moment; consequently, Gianavello was able to defeat the first before the arrival of the second. Just, however, as he was on the point of attacking this fresh body of the enemy, he perceived that two more squadrons were advancing rapidly upon him from opposite directions. Not a moment was to be lost. Quick as thought, he determined to repeat the

manœuvre which he had employed so successfully at Rora. Hastily giving the word of command to his men, sword in hand, the brave company cut their way through the detachment of the Piedmontese army, which was already discomfited, and speedily gained the topmost summit of the pass."

"O then they are safe!" exclaimed Charles.

"Not quite," replied Mrs. Grenville. "They were but three hundred men, and three thousand were now surrounding them on every side, hemming them in at every instant closer and closer still. There was no way of escape. There they must stand, conquer, or die."

"O mamma!" said Arthur.

"For five hours, without a moment's cessation," continued Mrs. Grenville, "did those gallant men withstand every effort of the enemy, calm, quiet, unflinching; not one stirred from his allotted post. At length, Gianavello's practised eye distinguished symptoms of wavering in the ranks of the soldiers. Looking up towards heaven, and clasping his hands in prayer, 'O God,' he exclaimed, 'it is for Thy cause, aid and preserve us;' and then, ordering a general assault, down bounded the Vaudois, like an avalanche, upon the foe. Astounded by an attack for which they were wholly unprepared, and exhausted with so many hours of fighting, the soldiers offered but a

feeble resistance, and, as usual, turned and fled; the Vaudois pursuing and killing 500, whilst they themselves lost but one man."

"This is the most wonderful thing of all, mamma," said Ernest. "I wonder the troops did not see that God was fighting for the Vaudois."

"It is easier to see it now, than it would have been to understand it at the time," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Even the best regulated mind is so influenced by the prejudices of education, and the passions or affections excited by passing events, that it becomes very difficult to consider them in a really calm and dispassionate manner. In after-ages, when the mists of earthly passions are dispersed, and events can be viewed by the light of God's unerring word, then only can they be appreciated with perfect truth."

"But, Aunt Helen," said Charles, to whom this discussion was extremely dull, "what became of Gianavello?"

Mrs. Grenville could hardly help smiling at the piteous tone in which Charles spoke, and continued—"Gianavello had drawn off his men to the heights again, and well would it have been if he had been content to remain there. But whilst the men were refreshing themselves, their indefatigable leader had gone to reconnoitre *the movements of* the enemy. No sooner did he perceive

that several squadrons, secure of not being further molested, had disposed themselves to rest upon the plains, than calling his men together again, he made a rapid descent, and falling thus unexpectedly upon the troops, obtained an easy victory. But, alas! it was too dearly bought. Just as all seemed over, a ball suddenly struck the gallant mountaineer, and entering his chest, passed quite through his body. The blood poured from his mouth, and he sank fainting to the ground. Regardless of all else, the men crowded round their beloved leader, and raising him gently in their arms, they bore him sadly and silently away."

"O mamma, mamma!" said Mary, "was Gianavello dead?"

"It was a noble death to die," said Ernest; "but I am so sorry."

"I do not think he is dead," added Arthur. "I have been watching mamma's face, and it does not look as if he was killed."

"I had no idea my face was such a tell-tale," replied Mrs. Grenville. "You are quite right, however."

"Hurrah!" exclaimed the children, clapping their hands.

"For some time," continued Mrs. Grenville, "it was supposed that Gianavello's wound was mortal. But at

length, whilst his weeping soldiers stood around him, looking their last as they supposed at their beloved General, he feebly opened his eyes. He had but strength, however, to speak some few words of comfort to them, and to depute to Giaheri the command of their little army. Still he was alive. He might recover; and hastily constructing a litter, they carried him with the most watchful tenderness to Pinache."

"O I hope he will live," said Arthur.

"Yes! God heard the prayers of his people," replied Mrs. Grenville, "and after six weeks of great suffering, restored their leader to his post; but, unfortunately, in the interim a most fearful catastrophe had taken place. Giaheri, whom as I have told you, had been left in command was a man of noble and generous nature, and of undaunted bravery, but sadly wanting in judgment. In the few words which Gianavello had been able to speak, he had strongly urged upon him the absolute necessity of resting his men before he undertook any fresh enterprise. Giaheri, no doubt, intended to follow his advice; but in an evil hour he learned that the town of Osasco might be taken with very little difficulty; and his informant offered to conduct him by a sure way. Yielding to the temptation, and accompanied by 150 *soldiers,* he followed the guide, and found himself

betrayed into a well laid ambuscade of cavalry. Flight was impossible. Giaheri at once saw that death was the certain fate of himself and his companions. His only thought was, therefore, to sell his life most dearly. His body was discovered afterwards, pierced through and through with balls. But one of all that company escaped to tell the tale; and he owed his safety to having slipped into a morass, where he lay concealed for many hours."

"O dear, what a pity!" said Mary.

"What became of the traitor?" asked Charles.

"He was the first to fall," replied Mrs. Grenville. He was shot by Giaheri the instant he discovered his treachery."

"Served him right, too," said Charles.

"I am sorry to hear of a traitor amongst the Vaudois," said Ernest. "They have been so very true to each other hitherto."

"So they were to the last," replied Mrs. Grenville. "The case I have mentioned is almost a solitary one, and afforded as much joy to their enemies as grief and shame to themselves. In fact, the death of Giaheri, and the supposed fatal wound which Gianavello had received, inspired the Papists with unbounded exultation. They

quite forgot that the Lord could raise up others; even though Gianavello fell.

"But the Roman Catholics were not prepared for the increasing sympathy which was everywhere excited for the brave defenders of their country and their faith; and every week fresh petitions were urged by the English and other courts in favour of the Vaudois, in hopes that some permanent truce might be effected for them. At length the Duke of Savoy appeared to give way; and offered conditions, so artfully worded, that he would be able to elude them whenever he pleased; and the Vaudois, only too thankful to be permitted to return, under any terms, to their homes, thankfully accepted them. In these terms, however, Gianavello was not included. There was no pardon for one whom at once they so dreaded and detested."

"O how could the Vaudois make peace without him?" exclaimed Ernest indignantly. "They deserve anything that may happen to them. What! desert the man who had done so much for them, mamma?"

"I must confess I feel very much inclined to agree with you," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and the time arrived too soon when they must have deeply mourned his absence: but still we must not let our feelings, like *Giaheri's*, get the better of our judgment; nor should

the good of one man be put against that of a whole people. I feel with you, as if I individually never could have agreed to such a treaty; but still I suppose they were right."

"I do not know about that, mamma," said Ernest, doubtfully. "But what became of Gianavello?"

"He and about twenty of his companions, who like himself were excluded from the amnesty, took refuge among the mountain fastnesses," replied Mrs. Grenville; "defying the utmost efforts of their enemies to take them prisoners; and here they continued to live for the next eight or ten years, their numbers being constantly increased by those whom the Romish persecutions drove from the valleys, or by those for whom a life of wild and daring enterprise had greater charms than the peaceful cultivation of the fields. At length, however, the solicitations of his own subjects exposed to the constant inroads of Gianavello and his men, united to the expostulations of the Protestant courts of Europe, induced the Duke of Savoy to grant such honourable terms to the Vaudois, as seemed to secure their liberty and their religion. And then Gianavello, generous to the last, dreading lest his presence should be made an excuse for the infringement of the treaty, immediately quitted his beloved mountains, and took refuge at Geneva."

"And his wife and children, what became of them, mamma?" inquired Arthur.

"I never could learn accurately what did become of them," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But as he seemed to live very happily at Geneva, I have always thought that they must have been allowed to rejoin him there."

"And did the peace continue?" asked Ernest.

"Alas! no," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Just as it seemed restored on a really firm basis, and the Vaudois hoped that now at length a period of happiness and prosperity would be opened to them, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes overwhelmed them in the disasters of their French Protestant brethren."

"What was the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, mamma?" inquired Arthur.

"It was a most unjust and iniquitous decree," replied Mrs. Grenville, "by which Louis XIV. deprived the Protestants in his kingdom of all the advantages which had been secured to them by the wise policy of Henry IV.; and thus drove thousands of his best and most industrious subjects to take refuge in foreign lands. But to enter into any detailed account of it now, would take us too long away from our friends the Vaudois; possibly when I have finished their history, I may be able to tell

you about the French Protestants, as there is a great deal which is most interesting in their story."

"O that will be very nice, mamma," said Arthur. "But now for the Vaudois. How came they to be included in a French persecution?"

"From the influence which the French court exercised over that of Savoy," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Louis XIV., who in his old age was completely under the power of the Jesuits, sought, by blind obedience to the Roman Catholic Church, to make atonement for the sins of his youth; and believed that he could offer up no sacrifice so acceptable to God, as the blood of the unfortunate Protestants. Not content, therefore, with the ruin and misery which he had brought on his own land, he insisted on the Duke of Savoy joining with him for the final extirpation of all heresy. It was, however, some time before he could effect his purpose. The Duke of Savoy had begun to see that his real interest consisted in being at peace with his Vaudois subjects, and that there was a great deal of truth in the remark which was once made by one of the very men whom he had sent against them.

"'Instead of seeking to destroy them, it would be well for your Royal Highness if you could boast of having twice the number of such loyal subjects.'"

"I am glad somebody understood them at last," said Ernest.

"It would have been well for the Duke, if he could have acted on this wise advice," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But the French influence was too strong for him; and in 1686, a war more fearful than any which had preceded it broke out afresh;—though war, perhaps, I ought not to call it, for the Piedmontese government had learned how very little they could do during an actual struggle, and had, therefore, recourse to artifice from the very commencement; Victor Amadeus writing a letter with his own hand, which bore his own royal signature, to assure the Vaudois that he meant them no harm whatever, if only they would be faithful and submissive subjects."

"O they should not have believed one word of it," said Ernest; "after they had been so constantly deceived, too, in former times."

"Who were they to trust," replied Mrs. Grenville, "if they could put no faith in their sovereign's word? Alas! that religion should be made an excuse for such base treachery and falsehood. No sooner had the Duke and Catinat, the general of the French forces, marched quietly into the valleys from opposite directions, and *taken possession* of all those strongholds which Gianavello

had so gallantly defended, than a massacre still more bloody than the one of which I have already told you, took place through the whole extent of the Vaudois territory. The details are so utterly revolting, that I could not give you the faintest conception of the awful barbarities practised. It would have seemed impossible that the ingenuity of man could have invented such tortures. The results may be told in the words of a French officer of Catinat's army—'All the valleys are wasted; all the inhabitants killed, hanged or massacred.'

"At last, the work of destruction seemed ended, and the Duke and Catinat withdrew their army from the valleys, proclaiming joyfully that not one heretic remained. They forgot that they were fighting against a Power higher than the Vaudois."

"Who, Aunt Helen?" inquired Charles.

"O Charles," said Arthur, "you know!—God."

Now if Ernest had given utterance to the quick expression of contempt which was rising to his lips, Charles would have been extremely angry. But there was something so gentle in Arthur's manner, that he replied quite kindly:

"O to be sure—how stupid of me; I ought to have thought of that at once."

"God has promised," continued, Mrs. Grenville, "that He will never leave himself without witnesses to the true faith; and, therefore, although He has often allowed His people to be sorely tried, yet still He has never permitted them to be utterly destroyed. No sooner was the restraint caused by the presence of the soldiery removed, than the most extraordinary figures began to make their appearance from crevices and fissures of the rocks, which seemed as if they never could have been made to hold a human being. Worn, emaciated, half-starved, but still retaining their undaunted courage and firm faith in God, this sad remnant of the Vaudois population met at last on Mount Beces."

"How many were there, mamma?" inquired Ernest.

"Eighty men and some few women and children," replied his mother. "Their first act was one of solemn thanksgiving to God, that when so many had perished they had been saved alive; and they earnestly besought His blessing on the enterprise to which they now devoted themselves, each taking a solemn oath, that they would never lay down their arms until they had obtained the liberation of such of their brethren as were still detained in captivity, and obliged their persecutors to grant them such terms at should ensure at once their religion *and their liberty.*"

"What was the use of granting them terms?" said Ernest; "they never kept faith with them."

"Hoping to surprise the enemy before they should hear of this new confederation," continued Mrs. Grenville, "this little band of devoted men, after having fervently besought God's assistance, boldly attacked the garrison of Villaro, drove out the soldiers, and followed up their victory by equally successful enterprises against La Torre, Luzerna, and San Segonzo. Then seizing on a large convoy of ammunition and provisions, which was on its way to Pinerolo, they retired in triumph to their mountain fastnesses, with renewed vigour and an accession of numbers."

"How surprised the Duke of Savoy must have been, Aunt," exclaimed Charles; "just after he had said, too, that not one heretic remained."

"He ordered the Marquis de Parelle and Gabriel of Savoy to march against them immediately," replied Mrs. Grenville, "and to destroy them utterly. It was easier, however, to give the order than to execute it. To march soldiers against a mere handful of men, concealed in caves almost inaccessible to those not intimately acquainted with the mountain paths, was a hopeless undertaking. Whilst the mountaineers, on the contrary, could by signals meet at any given point, fall upon any defenceless post of the enemy, and be off again with their

spoil before the regular troops could march to the assistance of their comrades. Wearied out with such an unequal warfare, the Marquis at length offered a free passage to the Vaudois to any country in which they might choose to take refuge. The Vaudois refused to accept this offer, until every one of their compatriots was released from captivity; and more than this, they insisted that they should be allowed to retain a certain number of the officers of the Piedmontese army as hostages, until they had passed beyond the Duke's territories; and that all the expences of their journey should be defrayed by the Duke of Savoy himself."

"Come, that was better," said Ernest. "I think they are getting wiser now, and know how to take more care of themselves."

"With some difficulty," continued Mrs. Grenville, "the Duke was induced to agree to these terms; and the mountaineers learned with delight that the prison-doors were to be opened, and the Vaudois set free. But alas! hardships and tortures had made sad havoc amongst the unfortunate prisoners; of the 15,000 who a few months before had constituted the happy population of the valleys, only 2,600 were alive to profit by the permission to depart, so gallantly obtained for them by the *worthy followers* of the brave Gianavello."

"*And what* became of them, mamma?" asked Arthur.

"Their first resting-place was Geneva," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and nothing could be more generous and noble than the reception they met with there; an immense body of Genevese, headed by Gianavello, now become quite an old man, going out to meet the exiles, and offering everything which could be given so alleviate their misfortunes. Of course, however, so large a number could not remain in Geneva itself; some, therefore, went to Brandenburg, others to Holland, others, again, to America. But still all who could find the slightest excuse, remained in Switzerland, in the hope of being yet allowed to return and die in their own beloved mountain homes."

"And did they, mamma?" asked Mary.

"I have not time to tell you to-day."

"One more question, mamma," said Arthur. "Had all the Vaudois been firm, or had any of them become Roman Catholics?"

"I am afraid it would have been too much to expect of humanity that every one should be firm," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But singularly enough, whilst those who kept true to their faith were permitted to rejoin their brethren in peace, those who had sacrificed their principles to their love of this present life, came for the most part to an untimely end. For the Duke, declaring that

they could claim no part in a treaty which provided alone for the safety of the Protestant Vaudois, ordered them off to serve in the galleys, lest they should escape and rejoin their fellow-countrymen; and in this wretched servitude, numbers perished miserably of typhus fever and broken hearts."

"How sorry they must have been," said Mary, "that they had forsaken God."

"It would be well if we could all take warning by their sad example," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"O but, Aunt Helen, we are not likely to be tried," said Charles; "we shall not be called upon to give up our Protestant faith."

"Do not be too sure of that, my love," replied his aunt, gently.

"But if I live in England, aunt, how can I?" persisted Charles; "and even abroad, no one will interfere with me. No one ever says anything to papa and mamma."

"Gently, Charles, gently," replied his aunt; "are you quite certain that even now you do not ever relinquish your faith in Christ, at the bidding of a more powerful prince than even the Duke of Savoy?"

Charles looked up quickly in his aunt's face; and then *he coloured crimson* as he thought he read her meaning.

"Whilst we live in the world, my love," continued Mrs. Grenville, "there is one form of persecution from which we never can be safe, and which may possibly prove more hurtful to us than any other, from our not suspecting the danger. If you watch yourself carefully, you will find that every day you are called upon to make your choice between God and the world. Every time that you conquer any evil passion, or cultivate any kindly affection, you have grown so much stronger in the faith. Every time that you indulge your passion, or vanity or revenge, or whatever the evil feeling may be, or gratify your love of ease or pleasure at the expense of another, you have so far forsaken your trust in God, and may be preparing for yourselves a far worse punishment than toiling in the marshes of Vercelli."

"Yes, Aunt, I see what you mean," said Charles; "But I should not have thought of it, if you had not said so. I have got some very new notions since I have been staying here."

"I am afraid, my dear boy," replied Mrs. Grenville; "we are all to apt to allow these thoughts to be new notions to us. We do not bring the principles of Christianity into our every-day practice, and consequently, we deprive ourselves of much that would be our best protection."

"What do you mean, Aunt Helen?"

"Supposing you were playing with a number of other boys, and one of them were to dare you to do something which you knew to be very wrong ——"

"But, aunt," interrupted Charles; "suppose they were to call me a coward? I could not let them call me a coward!"

"You would prefer being one in reality," replied Mrs. Grenville, very quietly.

"Aunt Helen!" exclaimed Charles, quickly.

"Which would be the greatest mark of courage, Charles; to do what was wrong from the fear of man, or to do what was right from the fear of God?"

Charles blushed deeply, and was silent.

"Believe me, my dear boy," continued Mrs. Grenville; "it is not so easy as you think to act up to your convictions; and that man is certainly the most courageous, who is so great a coward that he dares not sin against his conscience, and his God. Well, now, if you could feel this at the moment the temptation came, and think to yourself it is not so and so, who is irritating me, it is God who is trying my faith, you would look up on high for assistance, and then certainly you would come off victorious. We are expressly told, that this is a life of trial to *fit us for eternity*. It is not by great events that our

characters will be formed; many people pass through life without any great event happening to them at all. It is in the routine of our every-day duties that God is really speaking to us, and testing our faith; and not until we can realise this, will our actions be worthy of the name we bear. But I really have not time to talk to you any more now, if you do not understand me, I will try and make the subject clearer to you, when we can next go on with our story."

CHAPTER VII.

THIS opportunity, however, did not occur for a very much longer period than Mrs. Grenville had anticipated.

A few days after their last conversation, Mr. Grenville had taken the boys out for a ride with him. Being delayed on their return home, they were overtaken by a violent storm; and in order to reach a place of safety, they had to cross a piece of land which was being brought into cultivation, and which was interspersed with deep ditches and fallen trees. Charles, who was not so accustomed to riding as Ernest, had at first been considerably alarmed; but encouraged by his uncle, and finding that he did not lose his seat, he had soon gained courage, and had galloped manfully on by Mr. Grenville's side.

On his return home, he was wonderfully elated by the prowess he had exhibited, and by the commendation he had received. He began to think himself something extraordinary, and to compare himself and his exploits to those of Gianavello. "Take care," said his aunt, to

whom he had been boasting; "take care, that you do not resemble Giaheri more than Gianavello, remember that there is no true courage without prudence."

"Never fear, aunt," said Charles.

Mrs. Grenville smiled and shook her head, and Charles ran down stairs to mount his pony and go out for a rid.

"I shall most probably be detained for some time at Sir Robert Acland's," said Mr. Grenville, as they approached Turnville Park; "you had better go on for a ride, and call for me again. John!"continued Mr. Grenville, calling up the groom; "I wish you to take the young gentlemen round by Dunston Manor, and be back here again in about half-an-hour, now be steady, boys; take care of them, John." John touched his hat, and Mr. Grenville rode up the avenue.

For some time all went on very well. John, who was an old and valued servant of the family, was a great favourite with both the boys, and as they rode on either side, they favoured him with information of all descriptions, amongst other subjects with a really animated account of the exploits of the gallant mountaineers. Charles, unfortunately, could not resist the temptation of associating his own name with that of the brave chieftain, and saying how he would have ridden down the mountain sides, had he been there.

"Ridden down the mountain sides, nonsense!" said Ernest contemptuously; "as if you could ride down mountain sides as easily as you can get over a ditch a cat might step across."

"I am sure they were immense ditches, I leaped over the other day," returned Charles angrily.

"Merely trenches, to drain the land." returned Ernest; "Now if you had leaped over that ha-ha, it would be something to boast of," he continued, as he pointed to a sunk fence, which divided the park from some meadow land.

"Well, I could do the one as easily as I did the other," said Charles, in a cool tone of superiority.

"Could you?" said Ernest provokingly.

"Of course."

"Come, come," said John; "none of this nonsense, you could not sit that, Master Charlie, so don't you try."

"Yes I could, John, quite easily."

"I dare you to it," said Ernest.

No sooner were the words uttered, than Charles giving his pony a sharp blow with his whip, started off towards the sunk fence. Ernest instantly perceived his danger, and would have given worlds to recall his provoking and incautious words; it was too late now, too late for any*thing except*—repentance.

Even more clearly than Ernest, John saw the peril to which Charles had so rashly exposed himself; for, to a good rider, the leap would have been difficult, and to one so wholly inexperienced it was almost an impossibilty; whilst to ride after him might by frightening the pony, render the danger greater than before. And yet at whatever risk, it must be incurred, for he could not suffer the child to perish, without at least making an effort to save him. Putting spurs to his horse, therefore, he rode rapidly on in the vain hope of stopping the pony, which frightened by the sudden whipping which Charles had administered, had started off at a tremendous pace; and Charles, who though shaken, had kept his seat famously, had hardly time to recover himself, when he found he was fast approaching the sunk fence, and, for the first time, perceived the peril to which he had exposed himself, and at the very moment, when most he needed nerve, his presence of mind entirely gave way.

The spirited little animal on which he was mounted, hearing the sound of the groom's horse behind, became still more ungovernable. Nearer, and nearer, the sunk fence it came, and gathered up its energies to take the leap. Had Charles given it its head, all might yet have been well; but at the very moment, when he should have loosened his rein, he checked the pony violently

with the little strength he had, and pony and rider rolled down the bank together.

"My God, Master Ernest, take the reins!" cried the terrified groom, as he threw the bridle of his horse to the terrified child, and sprang down over the sunk fence. Ashy pale, and trembling in every limb, Ernest approached the edge, just in time to see John lifting up the apparently lifeless form of his cousin, while the pony, evidently much hurt, was struggling at a little distance.

"O John, John, is he dead?" exclaimed Ernest, the tears pouring down his cheeks. "O I have killed him! John, John, what shall I do?"

"Ride off, Master Ernest," said John; "ride off as fast as you can to the house, and tell them to send for a surgeon as quick as lightning. He is bad hurt, I am afraid; but he is not killed, thank God. Ride off, and send master here."

Ernest did not wait to be twice told; forgetful of everything but his cousin, he rode across the park at such a pace as he had never ridden before. Most fortunately, an eminent London surgeon was spending a few days at Sir Robert Acland's; prompt and efficient succour was, therefore, at hand, and the accident proved not so serious as had at first been feared. The child was

terribly shaken, and had dislocated his shoulder-bone; but still, with care and perfect quiet, Mr. Paget hoped that there was no fear of his entire and ultimate recovery.

In the first excitement of the accident, very little had been said to Ernest; but this only made him the more repentant, and more anxious to atone for his fault. Not only did he acknowledge the whole truth, and seek to take the blame to himself; but by giving up his time for the amusement of his cousin, he did all that he could to show the sincerity of his sorrow.

"Aunt Helen," said Charles, one afternoon when he was again well enough to be placed on the sofa, "will you go on with your story. No fear of my copying Gianavello now."

"You must copy him now in his patience and fortitude, my love," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and if am not mistaken, your imitation in this respect will be closer than before."

"Well, I must try, aunt. I am afraid I am not very patient. Annie says I am very cross. But do you know, aunt," added Charles, "I have often thought since I have been lying here, of what you said only a few days before the accident, and you see, if I had only remembered it at the time, it never would have happened. I

should have showed my courage by obeying John, and not trying to take that leap; and that would have been true courage, would it not?"

"Certainly, my love, it would. You will remember it in future, although I am very sorry you should have learnt the lesson by such painful experience."

Poor Ernest grew very crimson at these words. "Shall I go and call Mary and Annie, mamma?" he said, anxious for any excuse to hide his agitation.

"Yes, if you like."

"Please, Charles," said Arthur, as Ernest left the room, "do not say anything again before Ernest. He is so sorry. He told me the other day he would rather have had both his arms broken, than have spoken those taunting words."

"I did not mean to vex him," replied Charles. "I was not thinking of him."

"But must we not all try and think for each other, my love," replied Mrs. Grenville; "that is the real meaning of Christian charity,"

"But I was only speaking to you, Aunt Helen."

"I know you were, my love, and there was no harm in what you said; and as Ernest chose to act wrongly, he must take the pain he now suffers as his just punish*ment. Still, it* would be right and kind of you to be

guarded in referring to the accident when he is present, for I know he is very sorry, and he has tried to show you that he is."

"O that he has, indeed," said Charles. "He has been so kind, and——"

The entrance of the children, however, prevented any further discussion.

"It is so long," continued Mrs. Grenville, when they had all settled themselves comfortably, "since we have been able to go on with the story, I have almost forgotten where we left off."

"O I know, mamma," exclaimed Mary. "The exiles had arrived at Geneva; and you said a great many remained in the neighbourhood, hoping to be able to return to their own homes."

"Thank you, I remember now," replied Mrs. Grenville. "We have come to a most interesting part. I know nothing more extraordinary than the manner in which their wish was accomplished."

"Did Gianavello take them back?" enquired Arthur.

"No; he had grown much too old for any such enterprises," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but they were commanded by one in every way worthy to be his successor. Henri Arnaud had long grieved, not only over the dispersion of the Vaudois, but that they should be such a

heavy burden on their poor Protestant brethren. It seemed to him that they had been so iniquitously driven from their country, that they were at perfect liberty to recover it if they could; but in order to make you understand the full difficulty of the undertaking, you must remember that the Vaudois territory was in the absolute possession of the French king and the Duke of Savoy. That the lands had been confiscated and sold. That the Vaudois had been scattered here and there, wherever they could find a place of temporary asylum, and that they were ignorant of the very road which led to their own country."

"O mamma, I thought they knew all that part so well," exclaimed Ernest.

"They were intimately acquainted with their own mountain fastnesses," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but of anything beyond them they were entirely ignorant. Travelling in those days was very different from what it is now; and the Vaudois, from their pastoral and domestic habits, and from their extreme attachment to their own mountains, knew less of the outer world than perhaps any other race of people; consequently, when they wanted to return thither, they were entirely dependent upon guides, who would have to lead them through the most inaccessible defiles, and by the numerous garrisons *of the enemy's* forces."

"I wonder they were not afraid," said Mary. "I am sure I dare not have gone on such an expedition."

"I would," began Charles; and then a sudden recollection seemed to come over him; and he added, blushing, "I think I should have tried, Aunt Helen. I should have liked anything so adventurous."

"I think you would, my love," replied his aunt. "You would have made a famous mountaineer."

Charles coloured again, but this time with pleasure, for he saw his aunt had understood his self-correction.

"With the greatest skill and secrecy," continued Mr. Grenville, "Arnaud collected and organised a little band of 800 brave men, and on the 16th of August, 1689, they crossed to Yvoire, in Savoy, taking with them two peasants as guides. So utterly improbable, nay, so impossible did such an enterprise appear, that no one would believe it; and the report that a body of Vaudois were marching to regain their country, was laughed at as merely an absurd falsehood. To this, probably, they owed their first success; for they were three days advanced on their journey before any serious obstacle was opposed to their progress; and it was most fortunate that it was so, as they were thus enabled to pass safely through the defile of Maglan, where a few peasants might have destroyed them utterly by rolling down stones upon them

from above; soon after they were obliged to cross a precipice by a natural bridge."

"Natural bridge, mamma," said Arthur; "what is that?"

"Formed by nature itself, my love: in this instance by a piece of rock, which projected from side to side, and which had been cut into rude sort of steps, something like a ladder."

"O what a place to go across!" exclaimed Mary.

"Arnaud himself says, that there, twenty men might easily have stopped twenty thousand," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but, by God's mercy, there was no one to oppose them, and one by one they slid down the awful precipice on the other side, arriving in perfect safety at the little hamlet of St. Nicolas de Verose. For the next four days they continued their way over the mountains of Bon Homme and Cenis, and through the valley of Isore. That they were not attacked can only be attributed to the especial interposition of God; for the object of their march was known by this time both to the French general and to the Duke of Savoy, neither of whom could ever have expected to find again so good an opportunity of destroying them as amongst the dangers and difficulties of mountain paths with which they were unacquainted.

"The first point where they met with any serious opposition was in a defile near Salabertraun. Here it was necessary that they should cross a bridge over the river Dora, to defend which the Marquis de Larrey had placed a body of 2,500 men, whilst a force of nearly the same number was rapidly approaching to surprise them in the rear."

"What! and they only 800 men, mamma!" exclaimed Ernest.

"Even less than that now," replied Mrs. Grenville, "as some few of their party had perished from the fatigues and hardships of the journey. The instant the Vaudois approached to within musket-shot: 'Kill them, kill them!' shouted the French general. Arnaud had but the time to signal that all his men were to fall on their faces, when the enemies' discharge poured over them, wounding but one man."

"How odd they must all have looked falling down, aunt," said Charles. "I hope the French did not think they had killed them all."

"They must soon have been undeceived if they did," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for Arnaud, perceiving that in a short space of time he would be placed between two hostile fires, when the destruction of his little band was inevitable, gave the word of command for an instant

charge; and one of the Vaudois crying out in the excitement of the moment: 'Courage! the bridge is carried!' those behind imagining it to be the case, rushed so impetuously forward, that they literally bore back the French soldiers, and made true their comrade's words. Nothing could stand against the impetus of their charge. The Marquis of Larrey, in despair, withdrew wounded from the field, exclaiming sorrowfully:

"'I have lost the battle and my honour.'"

"He should not have run away then," said Charles.

"His example was speedily imitated, every one caring only for his own safety," continued Mrs. Grenville. "There were but few, however, who made good their escape; the field was literally covered with the slain, and all their baggage and ammunition fell into the hands of the Vaudois, who only lost, during the whole engagement, fifteen men. Night drew in before the pursuit was over. Arnaud ordered the trumpets to sound a recall; and there on the battle-field, surrounded by the dying and the dead, he made his little army kneel around him, whilst he solemnly offered up thanks to God for their marvellous preservation. It must have been a wonderful and imposing sight; and overpowering must have been the sound of so many voices rising at the same instant in joyful acclamations of gratitude: 'Thanks to the Eternal

of armies, who has given us the victory over our enemies.'

"The Vaudois, being masters of the field, might now, if they had pleased, have established themselves amongst the fastnesses which hemmed in the valley of San Martino, and from whence they might have defied all the efforts of their enemies to dislodge them; but anxious to regain possession of Luzerna, they determined to push on for that place, whilst the French troops were still disheartened with their late defeat. Not an enemy appeared to dispute the way; and when they arrived at Guigon, they had the inexpressible delight of finding that there at least their Protestant church had not been destroyed. Hastily removing from its altar and walls all the symbols of Romanism, the little army assembled for the first time since the commencement of their perilous enterprise, within a consecrated place of worship. With hearts overflowing with gratitude, they knelt before the King of kings; and at length, in the excitement of the moment, they drew their swords as they would have done had they been present at some great military review, and the clash of weapons mingled with their hymns of praise."

"O mamma, how exciting it must have been," exclaimed Ernest. "How I should have liked to have heard that service."

"It must have been almost overwhelming," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and was fitly concluded by Arnaud ascending the pulpit, with the Bible in one hand and his sword in the other, and delivering a most eloquent and touching discourse from the words of the 129th Psalm.

"The remainder of that day they rested; and on the following morning, after again assembling for public worship, they started on their perilous enterprise. A thick fog concealed their approach to Luzerna, and they suddenly found themselves confronted with a portion of the Piedmontese army. 'Come on,' exclaimed the Piedmontese, 'come on to destruction; we are 3,000 strong. The Vaudois did not answer, but steadily advanced. '*Qui vive?*' shouted the troops again. 'Speak, or we fire.' Still no answer. Silently, steadfastly the Vaudois pressed on. There must have been something in this resolute silence overpowering to their adversaries; for hastily firing off some volleys of shot entirely at random, they turned and fled, leaving behind them all their provisions, ammunition, and baggage."

"O what cowards," said Charles; "they deserved to be shot."

"I think God must have made the Piedmontese afraid, mamma," said Arthur, "just as we read in the Bible that *He often* did in the times of the Jews, when He made *their enemies* tremble before them."

"It is very difficult to account for such sudden panics as now often seized the French and Piedmontese troops," replied Mrs. Grenville. "We know that all things are ordained by God, and we also know that what we call conscience is but another name for the voice of God speaking to our understanding. Now the Vaudois were inspired by the firmest trust in the support and protection of the Almighty, whilst their enemies were disheartened by defeat, and by the recollection of all the dreadful cruelties which they had formerly exercised on the Vaudois, and the dread that the hour of retaliation might be near at hand. God never works by miracles when human agency is sufficient; and in the present instance the result might have been thus obtained without anything supernatural, which would only have tended to make the Vaudois superstitious, instead of humble and faithful Christians."

"I hope, mamma," said Mary, "that they did not revenge themselves on their enemies."

"In one instance only, at the taking of Bobbio," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and there, I am sorry to say, they pillaged the town, and put to death many of those who fell into their hands."

"I am sorry for that," said Arthur.

"So am I," replied his mother, "and so was Arnaud."

and yet, when you think that this was a solitary instance of any sort of retaliation for such awful injuries as they had received, their moderation seems to me perfectly marvellous. Encouraged by their success at Bobbio, they next endeavoured to obtain possession of Villaro; but, unfortunately, just as they seemed on the point of victory, a strong detachment of troops arrived to reinforce the garrison, and the Vaudois were obliged to retreat, and take refuge again in the hills of San Martino.

"Here, surrounded on every side by the French and Piedmontese troops, their sufferings were often inexpressibly great. At times, they had no food but raw cabbage, being afraid to cook any provisions, lest the smoke of their fires should betray their hiding places; and yet in this manner they subsisted for eight months, defying the utmost efforts of their adversaries to conquer them, or induce them to submit."

"Lived for eight months on raw cabbages, aunt," said Annie.

"Annie, how can you be so stupid?" exclaimed Charles.

"You need not be so cross, Charles," replied Annie, rather pettishly. "I am sure Aunt Helen said so."

"*I only* meant that it was at times their only food,"

replied Mrs. Grenville, kindly; "but I think the manner in which they always lived was almost as extraordinary; for weeks together they had neither food nor ammunition, except what they took from their enemies; and such skilful marksmen did they become, and so accurately did they know when and where to fall upon the enemy, that, at length, the very sound of a Vaudois musket would send a whole detachment of troops scampering off, as if they were pursued by double their numbers."

"What fun!" said Charles, laughing. "How I should like to have seen them all running."

"You may easily imagine, however," continued Mrs. Grenville, "that the dreadful hardships to which they were exposed, insensibly lessened their own strength, and when fresh troops were poured into the valleys, both from France and Savoy, it became necessary to adopt some decided line of action, if they hoped for ultimate success. In this dilemma, the little band fortunately looked to Arnaud for council and support. Having assembled them all, that they might join in prayer and receive the sacrament together, Arnaud pointed out to them that their only hope of success was in their being able to reach a precipice near Balsi, where, if they could but collect some provisions, he thought they might entrench themselves in such a manner as to defy the utmost efforts

of man to dislodge them. But how to reach Balsi was the question, as they must pass by roads in possession of the enemy, or over such precipices as seemed to threaten certain destruction. There was no time for hesitation; the latter alternative was instantly adopted, and in order to prevent the troops from ascertaining their movements, the march was to commence under cover of the darkness of the night."

"What, mamma!" exclaimed Ernest, "go over these precipices in the dark? Was that possible?"

"It seems an almost miraculous escape," replied Mrs. Grenville, "and yet, perhaps, it was fortunate that they did not make the experiment in daylight, for so fearful were some of the precipices down which they scrambled, on their hands and knees, that when they afterwards saw them in the daylight, they perfectly shuddered at the dangers from which they had escaped, and acknowledged that they could not have ventured, had they been aware of their peril. Those who have travelled much in Switzerland, would easily understand this, as all travellers know that one of the things most to be dreaded, is an attack of sudden giddiness, called vertigo, which is very apt to come on in looking down from any great height, and, depriving the person attacked of his senses, *necessarily* precipitates him into the gulf below."

"O yes, aunt, I know what you mean," said Annie. "Whenever we are going over any bad place in a carriage, mamma always has it, and she shrieks, and sits back, and covers her face with her hands."

Charles looked quickly towards his aunt, as if he doubted the reality of his mother's attack of vertigo, but Mrs. Grenville answered without the slightest appearance of having noticed his look—

"To any one as delicate as your mother, I dare say any excitement of the kind is very painful."

"O mamma is such an awful coward, aunt," said Charles. "What would she have done if she had been with Arnaud?"

"What should any one of us have done?" replied Mrs. Grenville. "I think we should all have been puzzled to follow him. In fact, had the Vaudois had either women or children with them, of course they could not have undertaken such an enterprise. As it was, they could not have succeeded but by the aid of Him who has promised—'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.'

"Arnaud himself says—'He who has not seen the paths by which we travelled, cannot conceive their danger, and would imagine any account I give of them to be a mere fiction;' and yet, by these paths, they arrived in perfect safety at Balsi, and immediately set to work to render their stronghold impregnable. In the first place, they raised seventeen walls of stone and earth, or whatever they could collect, and these walls were one within the other, so that if they were beaten from one they could retreat to another."

"And it would be no joke," said Ernest, "to attack walls built on the edge of a precipice."

"That was one of the advantages Arnaud foresaw in their present place of retreat," replied Mrs. Grenville. "As a species of barracks for his men he dug about eighty holes, or caverns."

"Why it must have looked like a rabbit warren, mamma," said Ernest.

"With the exception," said Charles, laughing, "that the Vaudois never turned tail upon their enemies."

"What did they do for provisions," asked Arthur.

"Fortunately, they were enabled to obtain a certain supply of corn, and chesnuts, and apples; and there were three capital springs which supplied the garrison *with water.*"

"O what poor fare," said Charles, "only fit for rabbits."

"The French, who had expected," continued Mrs. Grenville, "to have surprised the Vaudois in their late encampment, were not a little astounded to find that all trace of them had disappeared; and the four days which they spent in searching for them were of the utmost advantage to Arnaud and his little company, as it gave them an opportunity of completing their fortifications without interruption; and when Mons. de L'Ombraille at length appeared with his army, they were quite ready to receive him."

"And give him a warmer reception than he expected, mamma," said Ernest.

"For a week, every effort which human ingenuity could devise," continued Mrs. Grenville, "was employed to dislodge the Vaudois, or induce them to submit; they might as well have tried to dislodge the mountains themselves. Finding nothing could be done by force, the French next endeavoured to starve out the little garrison."

"O I hope the Vaudois had got a good quantity of corn and chesnuts," said Mary.

"Most fortunately," replied Mrs. Grenville, "they obtained fresh supplies; so that for many months they

were able to defend themselves in their strange wild home, trusting so implicitly in the all-merciful protection of the Almighty, that they gave but little thought to their present sufferings, or to their still more anxious future. Every Sunday, Arnaud preached twice in the day; and every day in the week was commenced with a regular service, which all attended. Things continued in this state until the following spring, when an army of 22,000 men were marched against Balsi."

"Twenty-two thousand, mamma?" repeated Ernest.

"Of course," continued Mrs. Grenville, "so large a force could not be made to act at once against Balsi. Five hundred picked men were chosen for the attack, and the rest were posted so as to be made available the instant they were wanted. 'My lads,' said Mons. de Parat, who commanded the attacking force, 'we must sleep there to-night,' and he pointed as he spoke to the cavern homes of the Vaudois."

"O mamma," said Arthur, breathlessly.

"Alas! for the horrors of warfare," continued Mrs. Grenville, "All but ten of that squadron slept before night the sleep which knows no waking; and the whole army, after seeing another detachment of about 7,000 men defeated, decamped in haste to Maccle, whilst the Vaudois lost not a single man."

"Hurrah, mamma, hurrah!" said Ernest.

"They had not an opportunity of trying the Vaudois beds," said Charles.

"Mons. de Parat was only too grateful to be allowed to make the experiment," replied Mrs. Grenville. "He was found after the engagement jammed in between two rocks and fearfully wounded, and was conveyed, with all the care and attention they could show, into one of those very cells whither in the morning he had intended to enter as conqueror. He offered to pay any ransom they demanded; but this Arnaud refused, saying, they did not need money, but would gladly exchange him with any one of their own people retained prisoner at Turin. This, with selfish thoughtlessness, the Piedmontese government neglected to do, and poor Mons. de Parat was thus forced to remain a prisoner."

"Did he get away, mamma?" inquired Arthur.

"Patience!" said Mrs. Grenville. "The French general was hardly likely to submit quietly to such a signal defeat. He took one month to recruit his strength, and then, with redoubled forces, approached to renew the combat. On all sides Balsi was now surrounded; and every soldier was bound by the end of each day, to contribute a faggot of wood of his own making."

"What for?" asked Arthur.

"To build up an approach to the fortress," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for sufficient wood would never have been obtained if the labour had not been made compulsory on the soldiers. Pile upon pile the faggots rose rapidly, and Arnaud became quickly aware of the danger to which they should be exposed if once the artillery could be raised upon them. But what could he and his little band do against such numbers; and the enemy had taken a lesson from themselves, for under cover of great sacks of wool impervious to shot, they worked securely at these terrible fortifications. At length they were finished, and the cannons placed upon them. Mons. de Feuquieres sent a flag of truce with an offer of terms—terms which the Vaudois indignantly rejected. A proclamation was then made far and wide, that all who wished to see the end of the Vaudois must hasten to Balsi, for there on the morrow they would be hung two and two together, for the gratification of the populace.

"On the daybreak of the 14th of May, the whole artillery was opened on the walls of Balsi, which being only formed to resist musketry, gave way before the terrible cannonade. By noon the defences were battered down, and, surrounded on every side, nothing but death seemed left for the Vaudois. In this extremity, Arnaud went to *Mons. de Parat.*

"'How can we answer for your life?' he said.

"'Impossible,' replied de Parat. 'I forgive you my death.'

"At that moment it seemed they must all inevitably perish together. But man's extremity is God's opportunity. Just as the columns of the French were advancing secure of victory, a thick fog suddenly enveloped the heights of Balsi. 'Follow me, and we are saved,' exclaimed a fine brave fellow, of the name of Poulet. Without an instant's hesitation, the Vaudois put themselves under his guidance. Poulet led them down such a fearful ravine, that they had to slide all the way on their backs, and occasionally even make bridges of themselves for each other. In this manner they went right through one of the enemy's picquets; and here they were almost discovered, by one of the Vaudois dropping a kettle which he held in his hand. Bounce, bounce, it fell from rock to rock reverberating. '*Qui vive?*' shouted the soldier; but as the kettle did not live, it had no need to say so. The alarm passed off; and the Vaudois party, which had remained breathless and motionless, moved swiftly on in safety.

"The troops meanwhile had eagerly ascended to the summit of the Balsi. Triumphantly Mons. de Feuquieres gave the word of command to seize the foe. The foe

cleared off, and showed broken walls, deserted caves, and the bodies of the wounded and the dying of the French."

"He should have caught the Vaudois before he said he would hang them," said Charles.

"He should indeed," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"Well, where did they go, mamma?" inquired Ernest. "I do so want to hear."

"I cannot tell you any more to-day. Charles is beginning to look flushed and tired, so you must control your impatience; and all of you go out at once for a run in the park. I will stay with Charles, who will, I hope, be able to refresh himself with a comfortable sleep."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE period of convalescence is tedious to every one; to children more especially so. They are not obliged to keep quiet from their positive incapacity to run about, and, therefore, restraint becomes doubly irksome, making them peevish and irritable just at the time when their little companions are least inclined to bear with them, the sympathy excited by seeing the sufferer in pain having been lost as soon as the pain itself was removed.

It requires a very strong effort of Christian principle to bear and forbear on either side; and this principle very few children can be expected to have acquired; and certainly neither Annie, nor Charles, nor Ernest could boast of possessing it. The latter had sincerely endeavoured to do what he could for his cousin as long as he was really ill, but when Charles became tolerably well again, then it seemed very hard to Ernest that he was still obliged to relinquish his out-door amusements and

rides for the sake of sitting in a close room with the little invalid.

Now it so happened, that just before the accident the boys had been extremely interested in building a boat, and a very nice boat it was—masts and rigging, and all very complete—and great had been their delight at the idea of launching it. This grand operation had been postponed at Ernest's desire until Charles should be sufficiently recovered to be present, but this period seemed so long in coming, that at last his patience was fairly tired out, and he declared he could wait no longer.

"O Ernest, do not be so unkind," said Charles.

"I do not think it is unkind at all," replied Ernest. "It is very selfish of you not to have asked me to launch our boat sooner."

"I am sure I am not selfish," said Charles.

"Umph," responded Ernest.

"You have no right to say so," rejoined Charles, angrily; "I should like to know what you would do if you were kept all day long upon a sofa."

"Try and not put myself in a passion," answered Ernest, coolly.

"I am not in a passion," said Charles; "and I say again, it is very unkind of you. Arthur would not do so."

"Arthur is not I," said Ernest.

"He is not, indeed," sneered Charles.

"I wish you would take a lesson from Arthur yourself," retaliated Ernest, "instead of sneering at others. You might do so with advantage, I can assure you."

"Thank you," said Charles; "I do not want any of your advice, I have suffered enough from following it already."

He well knew that this was the most cutting speech he could make; and Ernest, flushing with passion, replied angrily:—

"It was following your own obstinate conceit, not my advice, that has been the cause of all your trouble; and this is all the return I get for all my kindness. I am sure I will not wait any longer for such a spiteful, ungrateful fellow."

Ernest was making all haste towards the door, when it suddenly opened, and Mrs. Grenville came into the room. "It is such a lovely afternoon," she said, looking at Charles, without noticing Ernest, "that I think I may venture to take you out for a drive. How flushed you look; what have you been doing, my dear boy?"

"Nothing, aunt," said Charles, flushing deeper still.

"And you, too, Ernest, what have you both been doing? or is it the heat of the room?"

"I do feel the room hot," said Charles, hesitatingly.

Ernest looked scornfully at his cousin, but made no reply. The look was not lost upon Mrs. Grenville; she, however, took no notice but said quietly: "I came in to propose driving down to the lake, where I thought you might meet us, Ernest, and we would launch the boat; but if this cannot be done happily, it must not be done at all to-day; and I am afraid it is something more than the heat of the room that has flushed your cheeks."

"Ernest is so selfish, aunt," said Charles.

"If that is not truer than your last observation, I do not much care for the accusation," retaliated Ernest.

"Hush! hush! if this has been the style of your conversation, I am not surprised at the result. If you cannot play happily together," added Mrs. Grenville, "it is quite time you should be separated; you may go out, Ernest, where you please, but remember the boat must not be launched to-day."

Ernest silently obeyed.

"It was about the boat we were quarrelling, aunt," said Charles, as Ernest left the room. "He wanted to launch it to-day, and I thought it was so very selfish of him not to wait for me."

"*You forget* how long he has waited," replied Mrs. *Grenville.*

"O no, I do not, aunt; but he might have waited a little longer."

"You must still remember it has been very kind of him to wait so long; there was no necessity for it; and to be angry with him was not the way to gain your point."

"But he was so irritating, aunt."

"My dear boy," replied Mrs. Grenville, "I do not wish to hear any more accusations. I have no doubt there have been faults upon both sides; but I am glad of this opportunity of warning you to be careful not to give way, as you are now doing, to angry irritability. I know how difficult it is when you feel weak and poorly to resist the temptation; still you must try and make the effort. Remember how anxious you were to imitate the Vaudois whilst I was telling you about them; and think what would have become of Arnaud and his little company, if they had embittered their hard lot by constant quarrels and disputes."

"O but they were men, Aunt Helen, and men are so different to boys."

"The boy is father to the man, Charles," replied his aunt. "If you give way blindly to your passions in youth, you will find it utterly impossible to conquer them when you become a man; and he who would

command others, must first learn to rule his own spirit."

Charles was silent. "I do not want to go on with this discussion now," replied his aunt, "I think a little drive in the open air will do you more good. But as you are quite old enough to understand what I mean, so I hope you will be wise enough to follow my advice."

Charles made no reply, but his aunt's words were not lost upon him. When the boys met that evening, they were both very sorry for what had occurred, but were both, unfortunately, too proud to acknowledge it; and though they meant to be kind to each other, yet this feeling necessarily produced a restraint.

Things were in this state on the following day, when Mrs. Grenville sent a message to the children, that as Mr. Grenville was going out to attend a public meeting, she could, if they liked it, go on with the story of the Vaudois. Coming at this particular time, the announcement was more satisfactory even than usual, and the children were soon established in their usual seats.

"Now, mamma," said Arthur, "what did become of Arnaud and his companions. I do so very much want to know?"

"After the most incredible hardships," replied Mrs. Grenville, "they succeeded in reaching the heights

above Angrogna, where again for a time they could remain in comparative safety; but they must have run a great risk of starvation, for their food at times consisted only of a sort of soup made from violets and wild sorrel."

"Why, mamma, cabbages would have been better than that," said Mary.

"But, Mary, suppose they could not get any cabbages," said Ernest.

"O but, mamma!" rejoined Mary, "violets! what food! how could anybody live upon violets?"

"They must, indeed, have been a most miserable substitute for bread and meat," replied her mother.

"I cannot think how they could live upon them at all," added Mary.

"It is surprising on how very little life can be sustained," answered Mrs. Grenville; "therefore we have the greater cause for gratitude to God, who has given us so much more than we really require, simply to add to the enjoyments of our existence; but, unfortunately, we become so habituated to receive our daily blessings, that at length we cease to look upon them as such, and are too apt to consider their withdrawal as a positive injury. Perhaps it would be good for all of us to have some personal experience of what the Vaudois must have suf-

fered during the fortnight which they spent on the heights of Angrogna."

"Then did the French dislodge them?" asked Ernest.

"Most fortunately they had not the opportunity of attempting the experiment," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Just at that critical moment, when the Vaudois, exhausted by hardships and want of food, must certainly have been annihilated by a combined attack of the two armies, Louis XIV. thought fit to quarrel with the Duke of Savoy; and the consequence was, that both parties seeing the immense advantage that a close alliance with the Vaudois would be to them, eagerly sought to obtain the assistance of those very men, whom but a few weeks before they had been so anxious to exterminate."

"That was fortunate," said Ernest.

"The Vaudois did not only call it fortunate," replied Mrs. Grenville; "they saw in it a direct interposition from heaven in their favour, and fervently thanked God. And here, again, I think we should be wiser if we imitated them more closely; if we really felt that our blessings were derived from God Himself, we could not be so ungrateful for them as we often are."

"But, Aunt Helen," said Charles; "do you think every thing comes from God? All little things, I mean."

"Certainly, I do, but then God almost always makes

use of natural causes; He does not change the ordinary course of events, He simply disposes them according to His own wise purposes."

"Well, but Aunt Helen, supposing I had worked very well at my lessons, and got a prize, you would not think God gave it me?"

"Not the prize, but the abilities by which you gained it," replied his aunt. "At any one instant, if God had seen fit, He might by illness, or by many other ways, have deprived you of all power, and then what would you have done? If, therefore, you do not thank God for enabling you to succeed, your prize will do you harm instead of good, as it will only make you conceited of your own talents, instead of acknowledging in all humility, that you owe them to God alone."

"Well, I never thought of it in that way before, aunt," said Charles."

"I am convinced," continued Mrs. Grenville, "that the more we trace every event which happens to us, to the source from which it is unquestionably derived—even from God Himself, the better men shall we become, and the more simple-minded Christians."

"But, aunt," said Charles, "if I felt God was always seeing everything I did, I should be afraid to do anything."

Mrs. Grenville gently repeated the words:—

"'Thou art about my path and about my bed, and spiest out all my ways, for lo! there is not a word in my tongue, but Thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether.'"

"But, aunt, I did not think the words meant God was always there; there is something so awful in the thought."

"And is there not something inexpressibly comforting in it also?" replied Mrs. Grenville; "in the feeling that we are never for an instant out of the reach of God's protecting care?"

"But, Aunt Helen, if we do wrong?"

"Do you wish to do wrong?"

Charles and Ernest involuntarily looked at each other. Both coloured, but neither spoke.

"In that case," added Mrs. Grenville, gravely, "I agree with you; there is something very, very awful in knowing that you stand in the presence of that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, with your hearts full of passions which are hateful to Him, and which you yet make no effort to subdue."

"O mamma, mamma, I am so sorry," exclaimed Ernest. "Indeed, Charles, I am very sorry."

Charles' only reply was a sudden burst of tears.

"*My* dear child," said Mrs. Grenville, soothingly, for

she feared the excitement for him in his present weak state; "you really must make an effort to control your feelings, or I shall be afraid of speaking to you on such subjects at all. There drink a little of this," she added, as Mary returned with a tumbler of water, for which her mother had sent her, "you will soon be better then."

"O Aunt Helen, I will try, indeed I will," said Charles, making a great effort as he spoke; "but when you spoke those words, I was so sorry I had been so cross to Ernest."

"O I was the most to blame," said Ernest, who with his eyes quite full of tears, came up to the sofa on which his cousin was lying, and kindly took his hand. "I should have remembered that you were very weak, and then I should not have irritated you. I am very sorry, Charles, I will try and not do so again."

"And I will try to be more patient in future," said Charles; and the cousins shook hands warmly.

"Now, Aunt Helen," said Charles, after they had all been quite silent for a few moments, "now I need not mind God seeing me, need I?"

"Indeed you need not, my darling," replied Mrs. Grenville, as she stooped over him, and kissed him affectionately. "Without God's assistance, neither you nor

Ernest would have had the strength to do what was right; therefore, like the Vaudois, thank Him for the victory."

"That we will, mamma, dear," said Ernest; "and, indeed, I know you are right, for I am quite sure that I, and indeed I think Charles, too, have felt very uncomfortable ever since we quarrelled yesterday. But I did not choose to say so; and I am afraid," added Ernest, colouring, "I never thought of asking God to help me."

"Well, we will not say any more about it now," replied Mrs. Grenville; "you must try and remember it sooner another time, for I am quite certain whether you are doing your lessons, or playing with your companions, you will find it an immense assistance in your efforts to do what is right—to remember that God is ever present with you, to help and bless your endeavours."

"And now, mamma," said Arthur, after an instant's pause, "what did the Vaudois do? Which side did they take?"

"Ever loyal, in spite of all the injuries they had received," replied Mrs. Grenville, "they most joyfully acceded to the terms offered to them by the Duke of Savoy; and, in fact, they could not have desired more advantageous ones, if only they could have been sure of *their being* observed, for the Duke promised that their

lands, houses and possessions should all be restored to them; that such of the Vaudois as were still detained in prison should be immediately released, whilst those who were in exile should be invited to return; and better than all, that their churches should be re-opened, and they themselves permitted to follow their religion without fear of opposition."

"O that was capital," said Arthur.

"But the Duke will not keep to his agreement, mamma," added Ernest. "As soon as he has got all he wants, I am afraid he will forget all his promises."

"For the moment the Duke appeared sincere, and really grateful to the Vaudois for the assistance they were so ready to afford him," continued Mrs. Grenville; "and had it not been for the hatred which was entertained against them by the Roman Catholic Church, it is probable that they might at last have been allowed some repose. No sooner, however, did the account of the treaty reach Rome, than the Pope and Cardinals reprobated it in terms of unmeasured indignation: and Louis XIV., only too glad of such an opportunity of embarrassing his rival, took care to fan the flame with the greatest skill and address. The Tribunal of the Inquisition was assembled, and the Pope, as its head, issued an edict, by which the treaty ratified by the

Duke of Savoy was entirely 'annulled, quashed and reprobated, with all that it contained, as enormous, impious, and detestable;' and every one was ordered to proceed against the heretics just as if no such treaty existed."

"And this they call the Christian religion," said Ernest; "and the man who could give such an order is supposed to represent God on earth. O mamma!"

"It is, indeed, an awful profanation of God's sacred name," replied Mrs. Grenville; "how thankful we should be, that from our earliest years we have been taught a purer faith."

"Well, but, Aunt Helen," said Charles, "what did the Duke do?"

"For the moment he was overwhelmed," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But all his obedience to the Pope, as the head of the Church, could not blind him to the evident iniquity and injustice of his decree; he, therefore, determined to take the best legal advice, as to whether he might lawfully disobey it."

"O I hope he will have an honest lawyer," interrupted Ernest eagerly.

"He had more than an honest one," replied Mrs. Grenville, "he had a very brave and a very able one, who drew up a most skilful paper, shewing that not only *mercy, but justice* required that the treaty entered into

so solemnly with the Vaudois should be as solemnly maintained. This paper was sent to Rome; and as Spain and Austria both supported the cause of the Duke of Savoy, the Pope was obliged to submit, and make the best apology for himself that he could, by pretending that he did not understand the nature of the treaty, or he should not have opposed himself to it so violently."

"I am glad he was obliged to submit, mamma," said Arthur; "but I am sorry he had not sufficient courage to tell the truth."

"Cruelty and falsehood are very nearly allied, my love," replied Mrs. Grenville. "And the Pope, whilst he appeared to withdraw his opposition, was the more determined to carry his point. He suffered two years to pass quietly away, and then sent a Jesuit, accompanied by several monks, to make a tour of the Vaudois valleys, and report on the state in which he found their inhabitants."

"O dear! O dear!" exclaimed Mary. "I know the report which they will make."

"Alas! yes," said Mrs. Grenville. "It was only too easy to foresee. The Duke was obliged to yield; and on the 1st of July, 1693, he issued a decree, that all the French Protestants in his dominions should leave them in the course of two months, under pain of death. This

was, of course, a most disastrous edict, as you will remember how many French Protestants had joined the Vaudois, and had intermarried and settled amongst them; and, of course, to obey the Duke's order, families must be separated, homes broken up, and the prosperity which was just beginning to dawn upon the valleys, be again checked, if not totally destroyed."

"O I hope this decree will not affect Arnaud," said Ernest. "What will the Vaudois do without him?"

"He was one of the earliest of those banished," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and took refuge, in the first instance, at Wirtemberg. His loss must indeed have been very great to the Vaudois, but even in this, you see how wonderfully God can overrule all things for good. Had Arnaud not been banished, the world might never have been so fully aware of the wrongs and innocence of the unfortunate Vaudois. Arnaud travelled from place to place, exciting everywhere the interest and compassion of the people for his persecuted countrymen; and more than this, it was during his banishment that he wrote his celebrated book, "The Glorious Return of the Vaudois," from which I have learned the greatest part of the story I have just been telling you."

"What became of him, mamma?" asked Arthur.

"*He was* made pastor of Schonberg, where he lived

for twenty years, beloved and respected by all who knew him. He died in 1721, in the eightieth year of his age."

"I am glad he died happily and peacefully," said Arthur. "Still I wish he had been able to return to his native valleys. I think he would have liked it better."

"No doubt he would," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Still it was a very great mercy that he was able to be of so much use to those he loved, even from his far-off home; and now how delightful it must be to him to see the fruit of all his labours."

"Well but, mamma," said Ernest, "what became of the Vaudois who remained in Switzerland?"

"Fortunately for them," replied Mrs. Grenville, "no very long period elapsed before the Duke of Savoy found himself again involved in war with the French king; and then, as usual, the assistance of the Vaudois became imperatively necessary."

"I have no patience with him," exclaimed Charles, "he is so mean. He can always curry favour with them when he wants them to do anything for him."

"O you forget, Charles," said Arthur; "he did behave very well about the lawyer."

"Yes, but he undid his good again, by sending away the French Protestants."

"We must not judge him too harshly," replied Mrs. Grenville. "As a Roman Catholic, he would naturally take such a very different view of affairs from ourselves. His conduct was certainly marked by both weakness and selfishness; and yet, I believe, he was anxious to keep faith with the Vaudois; at least, he paid them the greatest compliment which was possible, for when Turin was besieged by the Duke of Orleans, in 1706, Victor Amadeus took refuge amongst the very men his family had so fearfully ill-treated, feeling sure of safety amongst the brave and noble-minded mountaineers, who, for his protection, generously exposed themselves to the fury of the French troops, successfully making head against them. As long as the Vaudois were thus of service to the Duke, nothing could exceed the consideration with which he treated them. But when he was again restored to his kingdom in peace, then the Romish intrigues were too much for his gratitude; and, although the Vaudois were allowed to retain nominal possession of their homes, yet no annoyance was spared to induce them to leave them of their own accord, and join their fellow-countrymen settled in Germany, Holland, England, and elsewhere."

"I wonder they did not go," said Charles. "Anything must have been better than such a life of persecution."

"I am afraid you do not realise the miseries of exile," replied his aunt; "perhaps, indeed, it is difficult for the young to do so. There is something charming, I know," she added, smiling, "to childhood in the idea of change. In after years, when you have learned to appreciate the blessings by which you are surrounded, you will find it quite different. An acorn is easily transplanted. It is difficult, if not impossible, to uproot the full-grown oak. Moreover, the Swiss, like almost all mountaineers, are passionately attached to their native land, and would think the humblest fare, amidst their own wild crags, preferable to the most luxurious living in the home of another. It was this intense love of their fatherland which induced them still to struggle on, endeavouring to bear patiently the injustice and ill-usage which they received. It would, however, have been quite impossible for them to have done this had they not received great assistance both from England, and from the scattered members of their own community. Still they were exposed to the most painful hardships; and the first eighty years of the eighteenth century were one long continued struggle with poverty and persecution. Years which were spent

by them in continual prayer, and unshaken faith. And the answer came at length; for when the whole continent was convulsed by bloodshed and slaughter, the Vaudois valleys enjoyed a comparative repose. Napoleon treated them with marked consideration; and they, at least enjoyed fully as much freedom as any other portion of his empire."

"O! have we got to Napoleon, mamma?" said Ernest. "That seems quite like coming down to our own times."

"It has been rather a rapid spring over the eighteenth century," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but as it was marked by no particularly striking events, I thought it would be better to pass on, and give you some notion of the state of the Vaudois valleys at the present day."

"Are the Vaudois still persecuted?" enquired Annie.

"At the present moment, they enjoy a greater amount of toleration than at any previous period of their history, replied Mrs. Grenville, "as for some years past their welfare has been the subject of deep thought to many excellent men, who have largely contributed by their efforts to ameliorate the condition of this much persecuted people. To none do the Vaudois owe a deeper debt of gratitude than to the late Dr. Gilly, through whose *benevolent* exertions a general sympathy was excited for

their cause. His attention was first roused to the subject by a letter which he chanced to hear read from Mons. Peyrani, one of the Piedmontese pastors, detailing the state of his cure, and earnestly entreating that some assistance in books and money should be sent to him from England.

"Dr. Gilly, whose attention had not been called to the subject previously, determined to make further enquiries. The more he studied the subject, the more interested he became in it, until, at length, he made up his mind to pay a visit himself to the Vaudois valleys, and if he found the truth of what he had heard confirmed by his personal observation, to endeavour to stir up his fellow-countrymen and other Protestant people, in a cause which he felt ought to be common to all who held the Reformed faith."

"I am glad he was an Englishman," said Arthur.

"Yes," added Ernest, "so am I. I like the English to be first in everything."

"I am afraid, my dear Ernest," replied Mrs. Grenville, "if they all sympathised in your spirit, there is one thing in which they would not be first."

"In what, mamma?" enquired Ernest, with unfeigned astonishment.

"In humility."

"O mamma! But you like me to be proud of my country, do you not?" added Ernest, after a moment's pause; you thought the Vaudois right to be proud of theirs. You praised them only just a little while ago for their love of their country."

"And should do so again," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but I think their love was something very different from pride, and from the desire that their country should be first. They held one love more sacred than even their mountain home. If we really wish well to our country, God must be first in all our thoughts."

"O but, mamma, I was not thinking of God!" said Ernest, eagerly.

"I know you were not," replied his mother; "and that is precisely the point with which I find fault. Yours was a most natural feeling, and, regulated by principle, would become a most right and noble one; but those will be the truest friends of our own land, who will be content to see her second in many things, so that she may be first in the service of God; and remember, they are our Saviour's words: 'Ye cannot serve both God and mammon.'"

"I see what you mean now, mamma," said Ernest; "but I cannot promise not to be pleased when my country *is* first. I like everything I love to be first."

"But, my dear child, you can surely see that that is not a right feeling."

Ernest blushed. "Yes,—perhaps,—yes, mamma," he added quickly; "of course, I can see that."

"Well then, my love, you ought neither to indulge in it, nor to boast of it."

"It is so difficult not to feel it, mamma."

"But, my love, do you think it is easy to conquer any wrong feeling. I must have told you the story of the Vaudois to very little purpose, if you think the service of God is the smooth and easy road."

"O but, mamma, their trials were so very different."

"They fought the good fight by the exercise of self-denial. You must use the same weapons if you also would gain the victory. It does not signify that one has one evil temper to subdue, and another another. The Vaudois never would have received the protection of heaven, had their hearts been full of worldly pride; and be sure, Ernest, that as long as you nourish this feeling in your heart, whatever you may think of yourself, or whatever others may think of you, in the sight of God, your actions will be nothing worth."

There was but a moment's pause," and then Mrs.

Grenville continued—"This long digression has taken up more time than I thought. It will not be worth while to go on with Dr. Gilly's adventures to-day. I will tell you about them the first time I have the opportunity. You must go now and amuse yourselves."

But his mother's words had made too deep an impression on Ernest, to make him feel inclined to join in any noisy game. He felt their full justice, and seating himself quietly in the recess of a window seat, he seemed lost in the contemplation of the distant prospect.

"Come, Ernest," said Charles, at last, "you have sat staring out of window quite long enough; come and have a game at chess with me. Arthur cannot, he has got an exercise to do."

Now Ernest had a particular dislike to chess. His quick active nature could not bear the restraint of pondering over difficult moves. This naturally made him an unsuccessful player; and Ernest liked nothing in which he was not first. He was on the point of giving his cousin a hasty refusal, when the thought came into his head—"What is the good of my sitting here, thinking about mamma's words, and determining to try to conquer my fault, if I make no effort to do so when the opportunity offers itself." And so, instead of the impatient

"No," which had risen to his lips, he got up from his seat, and fetching the chess-men, sat down with the greatest good humour to play with his cousin; and whether he lost or won was of little consequence, for he had gained a far better victory, in checkmating his own unruly temper.

CHAPTER IX.

"Now, mamma, we are all ready," exclaimed the children, as Mrs. Grenville came into the study a few days after the occurrences mentioned in the last chapter.

"I want to hear what Dr. Gilly did and saw amongst the Vaudois," added Ernest. "It seems more like truth than stories about those long since dead."

"I hope you do not disbelieve all that I have been telling you?" said Mrs. Grenville, laughing.

"O no, mamma, of course we don't," replied Ernest. "But do you not understand what I mean? It is like seeing a thing for myself, or merely hearing another person tell me of it."

"Why, Ernest," said Arthur, "you are like St. Thomas."

"I am afraid Ernest is like too many of us," added Mrs. Grenville; "want of faith is the real secret of almost all our faults. To follow this subject would, however, take me into far too grave considerations for present

discussion; so I think, if you please, we had better follow Dr. Gilly, instead, into the Vaudois valley, which he visited for the first time in 1822. His first visit was to the valley of Perosa, as he was anxious for an introduction to the venerable Mons. Peyrani, the chief pastor of the Vaudois churches. The description of his home will show you what many of these devoted clergy must endure, if such was the position of their principal, and should put to shame the luxurious lives led by many professed servants of God amongst ourselves. His palace was a humble cottage. Dr. Gilly was conducted up a narrow staircase into a very low room, about fourteen feet square."

"Why, not so big as papa's dressing-room," interrupted Ernest.

"I am afraid papa would not at all approve of such a small room," replied Mrs. Grenville. "A beautifully clean bed stood in one corner of the apartment, which contained very little furniture besides, and was totally devoid of even the commonest decorations. By a small fire was seated an elderly man, clothed in the simplest possible dress, his attention engaged in a variety of papers with which a small table was thickly covered. On the entrance, however, of Dr. Gilly, he rose from his employment, and advanced with the greatest cordiality to

welcome his guest, entering with great vivacity into the subject of Dr. Gilly's visit, and affording him the most valuable information of the state of the Vaudois churches at that time. You will have some notion of it when I tell you, that Mons. Peyrani's whole income amounted to £40 a year, and out of this he had to provide for his family, for the education of his children, and for the wants of the sick of his district, which consisted of small villages scattered on the mountain sides, at all times most difficult to reach, and at some seasons quite inaccessible."

"O mamma," said Arthur, "what a life!"

"Only £40," added Ernest. "Why, mamma, that would be starvation in England."

"I am afraid you would not think it much more than that in Switzerland," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"They must live upon their violet soup," said Charles.

"Their fare is almost as simple," replied Mrs. Grenville. "A little coarse bread, milk, goat's cheese, and chesnuts forming, as I think I have already told you, the principal portion of their diet; and as to their houses, the description of one of the better sort in the valley of Angrogna, which you remember was the scene of Gianavello's brave exploits, will make you understand how very little comfort they possess, as we should understand the term. It was built of a coarse stone, for the most part uncemented; there

was neither chimney nor glazed window, and the upper rooms were entered by a ladder."

"Something like that house we saw last summer at Ambleside," said Ernest.

"Yes, a little like that," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"But, mamma," said Mary, "you are not telling us about the houses of the rich people, are you?"

"Rich, Mary!" exclaimed Charles; "why there are no rich."

"But I mean the pretty rich," said Mary, good-naturedly.

"There is so very little distinction of rank amongst the Vaudois," replied Mrs. Grenville, "that it is not easy to define the class to whom such a house as I am describing would belong; most probably to those who would hold a middle position. Dr. Gilly thought that its outside looked so respectable, compared with some others, that he was anxious to take a peep at the interior; so gently opening a door, he found himself in a room shared by some children, a cow, a calf, two goats, and four sheep."

"O aunt, what a mess," exclaimed Charles, in a disgusted tone. "Nobody need live in such a mess as that if they did not like it."

"There is certainly no accounting for taste," replied

Mrs. Grenville; "and very probably these last thirty years may have done a great deal to change these very primitive ways. However, when Dr. Gilly was at Angrogna in 1822, the children seemed quite content to share their dwelling with their animals. The eldest little girl, who was about twelve years old, was very busy teaching the catechism to her younger brothers and sisters, who all appeared to be very attentive pupils. After a short visit to the children, Dr. Gilly mounted the ladder to the apartment of the father and mother, a room of about twenty feet square, and which contained every implement wanted for domestic use; not lying about, Master Charlie, here, and there, and everywhere."

"Aunt Helen, I have not done so lately."

"And why?" said Ernest. "Because you could not?"

Charles coloured.

"It was too bad of me to make such an insinuation, was it not?" said Mrs. Grenville, smiling. "Well, there on their separate shelves, in the most beautiful order, were pots, and pans, and dishes, and churns, and cups and bowls, and loaves of black bread, and cheeses; and in different parts of the room were a weaving machine and spinning machines, and all that the cottagers required for carrying on their daily occupations. The master and mistress of this humble abode seemed perfectly happy and contented,

and only anxious to make the most of all their blessings, and afford their children the best education in their power. The great difficulty of educating their children was one of the severest trials to which the Vaudois were exposed. Some of my little friends in England, who call their lessons 'horrid bores,' and are always longing for half-holidays, have no idea how anxiously these mountaineers would have profited by advantages which they despise."

The children coloured and laughed, and Ernest added—

"Now, mamma, you must acknowledge it is very jolly to have no lessons to do, and to be able to take a good long ride with papa."

"Very pleasant, indeed," replied his mother. "I have no intention of denying it; only I do not think it would be quite so pleasant to grow up an ignorant, illiterate man, wholly unable to take your place in society, and sinking into an inferior grade."

"But you do not think the Vaudois inferior, aunt," said Charles.

"Not in a moral sense. They are very likely our superiors in truth and honesty," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but in an intellectual sense, they cannot cope with nations who have possessed such far higher advantages. For instance, had their minds been more cultivated, they

never would have been content to rest quietly in the same habitation as their domestic animals; they would have invented some means of improving the condition of both parties. However, the Vaudois made the most of the little light which had been vouchsafed to them; and God in His mercy permitted it to increase and strengthen. A most excellent man, Felix Neff, was the first to lead the way; and Dr. Gilly's exertions have done much to bring his work to greater perfection."

"Felix Neff, who was he, mamma?" inquired Ernest.

"He was one of the most devoted missionaries who have ever sacrificed their lives in the service of God," replied Mrs. Grenville. "In fact, I think he almost deserves a place by the side of your favourite Oberlin. He was born at Geneva, on the 8th of October, 1798. His father died when he was very yonng; but his place was supplied as much as possible by his mother, a very intelligent woman, who was entirely devoted to this, her only son. Even as a child, he gave promise of attaining future excellence. He was unusually thoughtful, taking great notice of everything around him, plants, and flowers, and insects, and always seeking to learn something new from their nature and uses. But, alas! there was one thing which his mother could not teach him—to love God, for she herself did not believe in His *existence.*"

"O mamma!" exclaimed Arthur.

"She lived at the time of the French Revolution, when the most dreadful and infidel notions were the fashion of the day. Her nearest relations were infidels. It is perhaps, therefore, not surprising that she was so herself; still there must have been a lingering doubt in her own mind, whether, after all, she might not be in error; for though she pretended to scoff at God and at religion, she yet was glad that her boy from his earliest years delighted in the services of the church. No one was so popular with his master as the little Felix; but perhaps you will think he took an odd way of showing his approbation."

"What was that, mamma?" asked Ernest.

"When he had said his lessons remarkably well, he was rewarded by having another psalm to learn."

"That was a queer way!" exclaimed Charles. "I know if I had been Felix, I would have taken precious good care never to know my lessons in future."

"Ah! Felix was wiser than you," replied Mrs. Grenville, laughing. "At one time he had built himself a little arbour, where he was uncommonly fond of taking his books and learning his lessons; but at length he found his attention was so disturbed by watching the proceedings of his favourite birds and insects, that, like

a wise boy, he took his lessons to a quieter abode, and kept his arbour for his hours of leisure. In spite, however, of his love of study, he found plenty of time to be kind to others; and if any one wanted the cows milked, or the goats minded, it was to Felix that they made their wishes known. When he was between fourteen and fifteen, he was placed under the care of a most excellent pastor, named Montinié. This good man would gladly have been of service to him, but being poor himself, and Neff being poor likewise, it was not easy. The army at that period offered a certain independence, and into the army Montinié urged Felix to enter. To become a pastor had been the great object of his ambition; but when he thought of his mother, and the burden he must be to her in thus following his inclinations, he came to the conclusion that it was his duty to sacrifice them, and cheerfully to accept the appointment which was offered him. In the army he was assailed by quite a new set of temptations, but, with simple reliance on God's power, he was able to overcome them all. Once some of his companions were laughing at him, because he would not go to the theatre.

"'Do you find no amusement there?' they said.

"'I find too much,' was his brave reply.

"Another day, Neff was doing something, generally *the work of* a common soldier.

"'You leave nothing for the soldiers to do,' said his commanding officer. 'You have no idea of commanding.'

"'To understand how to execute your own orders is the best and surest way of commanding others,' replied Neff.

"When, however, he was about one or two and twenty a great sorrow happened to him, and then again his longing to enter the church returned. He sought for guidance in the most earnest prayer, and at length, feeling sure that he could not be doing wrong by following the darling wish of his heart, he relinquished his commission, and began life again as a pastor. A sphere just fitted for his active and energetic spirit was soon opened to him. There is one district of the high Alps so utterly wild, that for years no stranger ever visited it. The people lived in a half savage state, subsisting principally on the flesh of chamois or of bears, and dwelling in the most miserable cabins, shared equally between themselves and their beasts."

"Well, but, Aunt Helen," said Charles, "you told us the better sort of Vaudois did the same."

"O but remember, Charles," said Arthur, "mamma said there was a different room up stairs."

"There was a wide difference in the homes of the two people," continued Mrs. Grenville. "The Vaudois of the high Alps had no idea of order or cleanliness, and were

entirely ignorant of any of the useful arts which make the comfort of our daily life. Their only occupation was to tend the cattle, amongst whom they lived in squalid wretchedness. And yet, strange to say, these mountaineers, who might easily have been mistaken for savages, had all a tolerable notion of Latin, and could understand sufficient French to read their Bibles."

"O mamma," exclaimed Ernest, "how had they ever learned?"

"It is supposed," replied Mrs. Grenville, "that this knowledge was handed down from father to son from the earliest generations; for these Vaudois pride themselves on being the true descendants of the early Christians who, flying from persecution in the fifth century, took refuge in the Alpine fastnesses. Be this as it may, it was to this half savage tribe that Felix Neff determined, with the blessing of God, to bring the comforts of civilization. Difficulties which would have disheartened others, gave fresh stimulus to his zeal; and in the winter of 1823 he commenced his laborious work. His great anxiety was to reach Dormilleuse, the most inaccessible point of his charge, for this strange wild village hangs from the rocks something after the fashion of an eagle's nest. There is but one way of approach to it, and this *is up the* mountain side, down which a torrent of water

rushes during the short period of the year when the sun has sufficient power to melt the snow; and for the remaining months the ascent can only be performed by clambering up a wall of ice."

"O mamma, how did anybody ever get to such a place?" exclaimed Mary.

"Very few ever did perform the feat," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and only the Spirit of God, who watches over and protects those who love Him, could have inspired the heart of man with sufficient courage to attempt an enterprise so full of peril as that on which Felix Neff was now engaged.

"Even he was staggered at the first appearance of Dormilleuse, its wretched hovels, and their squalid dirty inhabitants; but, trusting in the aid of the Holy Spirit, he set manfully to work, and was soon astounded at the influence he acquired over the minds of the half savage population. They crowded round him, listening eagerly and patiently to his teaching, coming from immense distances, and incurring the most fearful perils to be present at the meetings which he sometimes held two and three times a day. But Neff was not content with only preaching to them, he entered into all their pursuits, and sympathised in their sorrows or their joys: and in spite of the fatigue, both bodily and mental, to which he was

every day exposed, he never spared himself if he thought his exertions could stimulate those of others. For instance, when he one day had reason to expect a larger congregation than usual, he called together, very early in the morning, as many active young men as he could find, and proposing to them that they should all go in a body and cut steps in the ice, that the passage might be rendered less perilous to the women and invalids, he himself first took up a hatchet, and leading the way, set to work with such a hearty good will, that on the arrival of the villagers from distant parts, they found a very tolerable ladder prepared and ready for their ascent."

"What a pity his captain could not have seen him then, Aunt Helen!" exclaimed Charles. "He would not then have told him he had no idea of commanding."

"He would have recognised the truth of Neff's reply, I should think," said Mrs. Grenville; "and seeing that 'knowledge is power,' would have acknowledged the great benefit of accurate information on all points. It is understanding what we do that constitutes the difference between a man and a machine."

"O Aunt Helen!" said Charles, laughing.

"Well, see what it is in your daily lessons," replied Mrs. Grenville. "You have so many lines of Latin to *learn*; you have a good memory, and you do not take

the trouble to construe them; you learn them quickly by heart, but you do not understand the meaning of one word in ten: a parrot might do the same. A few days after this you are in the drawing-room, when your uncle is in conversation with some gentlemen; a reference is made to these very lines; your uncle appeals to you for a quotation. Now you know the Latin most perfectly, and if any one started you at the first word, no one would run off the passage more glibly than yourself; but alas! the question has been put to you in English; your knowledge is in a sealed box, and, for want of the key, you must be content to pass as ignorant and oblivious."

"Yes, I see what you mean, aunt," said Charles; "but supposing you told me to do any particular thing, you would be very angry if I stopped to ask you the reason why I must do it."

"That is a very different case from the one in question," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for whilst you are a child I am to you in God's place, and you are bound to obey my commands as I am bound to obey God's laws, and there may be points in which I should no more think it right to explain my reasons to you than God has thought it fit to render His ways clear to me. In both cases, it may be a necessary exercise of faith; but this has nothing whatever to do with our taking the trouble

to understand thoroughly the nature of our daily duties and employments. This is the point which I wish to inculcate, and it was this which gave Neff the great influence which he possessed over the minds of those with whom he came in contact."

"But did he succeed, mamma," asked Mary, "in making the people more civilized in their manners, and teaching them not to live with their cows and goats, and all those sorts of things?"

"That is a most comprehensive question," replied her mother, smiling. "The Vaudois had been content to live in this manner for six hundred years; their habits were, therefore, not likely to be altered in a few weeks; and as fortunately Neff did not begin his work with any exaggerated notions of the success he was likely to obtain, he was perfectly satisfied when he found the people willing to be taught, anxious to understand God's will, to join in His service and to receive His sacraments. About a year after Neff began his ministrations amongst them, he had a most gratifying proof of his success. The inhabitants of Fousillarde, a village a little lower down the mountain side than Dormilleuse, declared that they would no longer allow their pastor to officiate in the miserable stable where the service had been hitherto performed, but that they would build him a church; and

accordingly they all joined together, one sold a pig, another a cow, another some wool, another some wheat, and with the money thus produced they built a neat little church, twenty-seven feet long by twenty feet wide."

"O mamma!" interrupted Arthur, "what a funny little place; not so large as this room."

"Not nearly," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and yet, small as it was, the poor people were obliged to incur a debt to finish it."

"Why, what did it cost?" asked Charles.

"Twenty-four pounds."

"Only twenty-four pounds!" repeated Charles. "And could they not pay that? Why, mamma gave sixty pounds for a shawl just before we left home. It would have built two churches!"

"But, mamma, in England it costs a great many thousands to build a church," said Ernest. "It was only the day before yesterday, I heard Mrs. Weston tell papa, that the new church at Arlington had cost sixteen thousand pounds."

"Yes; but it was a very different church from the one at Fousillarde," replied Mrs. Grenville. "The rough materials of which that was built were found in the neighbourhood, and many of the mountaineers, animated

by love of their pastor, were glad to give their time and labour for very little, or, in some instances, for no recompense whatever. It is a sad thought, that whilst we are in the possession of every blessing and luxury, so many are wanting the simplest conveniences for serving God, or for living in godliness amongst themselves."

"But, mamma," said Ernest, "it is so difficult to know how to do good to people so far away."

"It is easy to make this excuse," replied Mrs. Grenville. "The best test of our desire to do good to others, will be found in the amount of self-denial which we exercise upon ourselves."

"Aunt Helen," asked Charles, "How much of our money do you think we ought to give away?"

"That is a difficult question to decide," replied Mrs. Grenville, "and will be sure to be answered best, not by duty, but by the love which we bear to God; for when we really love Him, our great anxiety will, of course, be to do everything which will most promote his honour and glory; and we shall not grudge to deny ourselves when, by so doing, this object can be obtained. It is impossible to lay down any fixed rule of what ought to be expended in works of charity. This must so much depend on the calls which each person may have upon *them in* their own home. I have always, however, ever

since the time when I was much younger than you are now, made one rule from which I have never swerved; I have laid quite aside a certain portion of whatever was my yearly allowance or income, and then, feeling that this particular sum no longer belonged to myself, I was at perfect liberty to spend it for any object that seemed desirable."

"But when you were quite a little child, Aunt Helen, did you do that?" said Charles.

"Yes. I was quite a little child," replied Mrs. Grenville, "when my own dear mother pointed out to me the advantage of such a plan; and amongst the many blessings which I owe to her loving teaching, none has ever seemed to me more valuable than this early lesson of self-denial. But, however, we must return to Felix Neff, and his church, which he himself had the pleasure of seeing consecrated with all due solemnity; and he was peculiarly gratified by the service being attended by one old pastor, who, although ninety-three years of age, had come many miles to be present at the ceremony."

"O how very old!" exclaimed Mary.

"Neff must have needed some such cheering proofs of his influence," continued Mrs. Grenville; "for his life was one unceasing round of labour and fatigue, travelling from village to village, teaching and preaching wherever

he went. Just to give you an idea of his journeys, I will tell you of one which does not appear to have been at all more perilous than usual. He was on his way from Orsière to Dormilleuse, when a violent storm came on. Having promised the people of Dormilleuse to be with them at a certain time, he was afraid of disappointing them; and, therefore, determined to venture on in spite of the thunder and lightning."

"O I am sure I should not have done so," exclaimed Annie.

"No, that you would not," replied Charles. "Never was such a little frightened goose."

Annie coloured rather angrily; but Mrs. Grenville took no notice, and continued—

"As Neff pursued his ascent, he found the snow deepening at every step. The heavens grew blacker and blacker, the lightnings flashed, the thunder pealed, and the roll of falling avalanches reverberated from every side; whilst a perfect cloud of snow-flakes prevented Neff from seeing the very path he was pursuing."

"O!" said Mary, with a long drawn sigh; "but do you not think he was very frightened, mamma?"

"No! he seems to have been as calm and self-possessed as possible," replied Mrs. Grenville; "feeling sure that *as he was* doing God's work, God would protect him;

and so it proved. He entered Dormilleuse at the appointed time, and preached to an eager and expectant congregation; one of whom gratified him extremely after the service was ended, by saying,—'Ah, it is delightful to have you amongst us again. Your coming is like a woman lighting a fire; she fans it into life with her breath; but if she goes away, the sparks die out."

"But Neff had such a number of fires to fan," exclaimed Ernest. "It would be very awkward if they all went out in his absence."

"Perhaps it was this fear which made him so indefatigable in his exertions," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"When he had given a good puff to one fire he went on to another; ay, Aunt Helen?" said Charles.

"Precisely; and the journey of which I have just told you is but a slight specimen of the hardships which he cheerfully endured, for the sake of keeping these fires alive. But it was not only religious instruction which he imparted. He knew quite well that he must improve the habits of the people before he could raise their minds to understand the great truths of the Gospel. He determined, however, to begin his reforms very gently, and took occasion at one time to remark, how much more fertile their meadows would become if they were properly watered, and proposed to make an aqueduct. To his

surprise, he found that there was one already, but that it was out of order, and dry. Why not repair it? Various objections now arose. Some were afraid of the labour; some of the expense; some of not getting their fair share of water when the aqueduct was repaired. With admirable tact, Neff overruled all these objections. And under his own auspices the work began. After an hour or two's labour the men said, 'they must leave off, and return home to breakfast.'

"'Not at all,' said Neff, 'we will have our breakfast here together;' and sending for his own, and theirs likewise, they all sat down to eat it in the open air.'

"'We shall be six days doing this work,' said some of the men. 'We shall be ten, at least,' said others.'

"'Not quite so long,' replied Neff, with a smile; and as soon as breakfast was over, he once more set vigorously to work. The men, catching his enthusiasm, co-operated with him heart and soul, and at four o'clock on the same day, the water flowed over the meadows amidst the delighted shouts of the astonished population of Dormilleuse."

"What a fine fellow he was!" exclaimed Ernest.

"His work was not, however, yet accomplished. The water had to be made thoroughly subservient to his schemes, and also to supply the village fountains, a service

which it had hitherto steadily refused to perform. Here Neff again found the great advantage of his studies whilst in the army. He was able to act as engineer in chief; and in a shorter time than he had dared to hope, the whole of this great work was accomplished. His success in this, of course, gave him increased influence with the people, and encouraged him to try a still more difficult task, that of conquering their ignorant prejudices, and inducing them to cultivate their land on more scientific principles. Knowing, by experience, that no mere words would be of any service, he took a spade and hoe, and himself showed the people how the potatoes should be planted. It was all very well to show them; but directly the people found that he placed the potatoes six or seven times the distance from each other that they had been accustomed to do, they at once decided that it was an absurd and useless waste of ground; and though their respect for their pastor prevented their plainly telling him so to his face, yet directly his back was turned they returned to their old method."

"O how silly!" exclaimed Charles. "They should have remembered the water."

"Prejudices are never overcome in a day," replied Mrs. Grenville, smiling; "a certain little friend of mine must think of himself before he judges harshly of the *ignorant villagers* of the high Alps."

"O Aunt Helen!" said Charles, rather sadly.

"But, mamma," inquired Arthur, "were they all so foolish?"

"No; most fortunately one or two of the better educated seemed to have thought," replied Mrs. Grenville, "that the man whom they had so often found to speak the truth, was not likely to deceive them now, and determined to give his plan a trial; and when the villagers found that those particular crops were twice as large as their own, they were only too glad in the following year to profit by their friend's experience, and follow the directions of their indefatigable pastor, who having so far succeeded, now determined to put the crowning stroke to his labours, by endeavouring to work a change both in their domestic habits, and in their places of abode. This was, of course, the most difficult task of all. But nothing disheartened him, and he worked patiently on, content if here and there he saw some small fruit of all his exertions. Perhaps his greatest triumph was in the foundation of a school, which now, thanks to the exertions of Dr. Gilly, and other good men who like him have devoted themselves to further the cause of the Vaudois Church, promises to produce the most solid and lasting good to all the Alpine Protestants. It will not however be worth while to begin to tell you about the school

to-day, for I think I hear the carriage coming round now, and I want to take Charles for a drive before the fineness of the day is overclouded. Would any one else like to come?"

Two or three little voices replied in the affirmative; and in a few minutes more the merry party started for their drive. They had not gone very far, when both they and the horses were startled by a most terrific explosion. It was well that the coachman was such an admirable driver, or a serious accident might have occurred, for the horses started off terrified by so unusual a sound; and it was some time before they could be brought under control. This fresh cause of alarm occupied all the children's thoughts, and it was not until the beautiful but spirited animals had been for some time trotting peaceably along the road, that the children's excitement was sufficiently allayed to exclaim: "What could it have been, mamma?" "What could it have been, Aunt Helen?"

"It sounded like a mine explosion," replied Mrs. Grenville; "or it may be some sad accident at the powder-mills. I am afraid we shall hear of a terrible disaster."

These words were too surely verified; for on the following day, whilst the family were still at breakfast, Mr.

Carden, the steward, sent to know whether he might speak to Mr. Grenville. It was such an unusual summons, that the whole party awaited Mr. Grenville's return with considerable impatience.

"You were quite right, Helen," he said, when he at length entered the room, looking much distressed; "yesterday's explosion was a most fearful one. Ten men are killed, and numbers more wounded. I am going to ride over immediately to Westerton, to see what can be done for the sufferers. I shall want you all to help me, so be ready by my return."

The children immediately began to discuss in what way they could be of the most use; and Charles, who was really of a fine, generous temper, was even more anxious than his cousins to be of service; but what could he do? Alas! on examining the state of his finances, only one shilling was remaining. Had he been at home, he would have had no difficulty whatever; for his father was in the habit of allowing him everything he asked for. But at the Grange it was quite different, for Mr. Grenville had made an especial agreement with his brother, that during the period of the children's visit, they should be subject to precisely the same regulations as his own children; and one of these was, that the boys should never anticipate their monthly allowance of pocket-

money, and Charles knew that his uncle never broke his rules.

"O how provoking!" he exclaimed; "now if I had not bought that chain, which I did not want, and which I have given to Thomas, and that knife which turned out such a bad one that I threw it away; and that—but I do not know what I have done with my money—I am sure I ought to have more than this shilling," and he turned the unfortunate piece of money round and round, as if he almost hoped it might multiply in his fingers.

"Well, there is no use thinking of that," said Ernest; "let us think what you had better do now. There is your allowance due on Saturday."

"Yes, but I owe a little of that," said Charles, colouring.

"Why, then even that shilling is not your own."

"No—not precisely," replied Charles, colouring deeper still.

"O never mind, never mind, Charles, what you owe," said Arthur, kindly; and then seeing Ernest's astonished look, he added quickly, "it is only a little debt of Charles' and mine, and I will willingly let you have the money. Indeed I will," he added, as Charles did not reply. "I would not have said a word, only I thought you would like me to explain when Ernest looked surprised."

"Yes, I do like it," replied Charles firmly. "I was thinking how kind and generous you were, not to have said anything about it before, and whether I could manage anyhow. But I can't, because you see, Arthur, it would not be I who gave the money. It would be you; and pretty generosity that would be. No—no—let me owe this shilling for a little longer, Arthur, and I will give that," and Charles walked away to the window to hide the tears of disappointment which were gathering in his eyes.

The cousins talked for some time among themselves, in the hope of finding some plan which might reconcile difficulties; but Charles' last argument was unanswerable, and in everything which they proposed they were met by the same objection—it was they who gave, and not their cousin, and to this he would not listen.

CHAPTER X.

THE children were still deep in consultation, when they were summoned to their tutor. At first Charles could pay no attention whatever to his lessons; his thoughts were perpetually wandering to the poor sufferers with regret to think how little he could do for them. Mr. Williams had already spoken to him somewhat severely about his inattention, when he surprised both his master and his cousins, by exclaiming, "Oh, I know what I can do!"

"You could pay attention to your lessons, if you tried," said Mr. Williams.

"Yes, I know I could," said Charles; "I am afraid you have thought me very idle and inattentive, but I have had something on my mind, indeed I have, I could not think of my lessons; but now I see what I can do, so if you will let me run away just for five minutes and speak to Aunt Helen, I will come back and be so good, you do not know how good; you will be quite surprised, I will work up in no time."

Fortunately for Charles, Mr. Williams was a man of good judgment and extremely fond of children, instead therefore of being angry with him, he saw at once that the poor child really had something on his mind, and that there was no chance of his being able to fix his attention until he had spoken of it to his aunt; so he very good-naturedly replied—

"Well, run away, my boy, only make haste back again, and remember your promise of working hard when you return."

Charles lost not a moment in profiting by the permission, and quite breathless he entered the drawing-room, where he fortunately found Mrs. Grenville alone.

She looked up astonished at his sudden entrance, and was still more astonished, when coming up to her, he threw his arms round her neck, and hiding his face on her shoulder; "Aunt Helen, dear," he said, "I have been so foolish, I have spent all my money, in all sorts of things for myself, and I have not got anything to give those poor people. But I have thought of something if you do not mind, Aunt Helen."

"Well, my love, what is it?"

"You know, Aunt," said Charles, looking up in her face as he spoke; "you said I might have a new cricketing dress, for the match we are to play at Earlswood?"

"Yes, my love, I did."

"Now, Aunt, might I not play in my old, and would you not let me have the money which my new one would cost?"

Mrs. Grenville stooped and kissed her nephew's fine open brow. Checking, however, her impulse to praise him, she said very quietly; "Have you thought of this well, Charles? Remember, your dress will look very shabby amongst all the new ones; are you sure that you will not repent?"

"I do not say, Aunt Helen," replied Charles; "that when I see all the new dresses, I shall not wish for one also, because I dare say I shall; but I am sure I have made up my mind—I would rather give the money."

"Then I am sure, my darling," replied Mrs. Grenville, affectionately; "you shall have that pleasure, and of another thing, I am still more certain," she added, "that you have by this act of self-denial, proved yourself a most worthy imitator of the great men you have so much admired."

"O Aunt Helen! do you think so?" exclaimed Charles, feeling, at the moment, as if his pleasure had been very cheaply purchased.

"I do indeed, my dear boy," replied Mrs. Grenville; "very great sacrifices are comparatively speaking, required but of few. It is the self-denial in little things,

such as you have to-day practised, that lays the foundation of a great and noble character; you have earned the approbation of your conscience; and I think I may venture to prophesy," added Mrs. Grenville, smiling; "that you will find this give you much more real satisfaction, than the possession of the best cut cricketing jacket which was ever put on. But now run away back again to the study, Mr. Williams must be ready for you by this time."

"O yes, Aunt Helen, he has been here a long, long while, but I could not attend to my lessons till I had spoken to you; but I will run away now, and I will be so good—for I feel so happy, I am so glad I thought of it."

And giving his aunt one more kiss, he ran back to the study, and settled so cheerfully to his lessons, that Mr. Williams was quite justified in saying at their conclusion, "Well done, Charles, you have quite redeemed your word."

No sooner, however, were the lessons at an end, than the boys scampered off to the drawing-room, where they found Mary and Annie equally impatient with themselves to know whether Mr. Grenville had returned, and if so what report he brought. To their great disappointmen however, they found that no tidings had been y

received. Mrs. Grenville bore very good-naturedly for some time with all their wonderings and questions; but, even her patience was at last exhausted. "My dear children," she said; "I think you had better get something to employ yourselves with, than distract every one about you with these ceaseless enquiries, and we really can know nothing till papa returns—shall I go on with Neff's life, to wile away the time?"

The "O yes, do!" from all the children, proved that this was a most seasonable suggestion, and Arthur eagerly exclaimed: "Now, mamma, tell us about Neff's school."

"Did he adopt the principle he had found so very agreeable himself," asked Charles, laughing; "that the boy who did best, should have double work to do?"

"I should think very probably he did," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for his school was formed for those who were really anxious to get on, and not for idle little monkeys, who were content to remain at the bottom of their class."

"I have not the pleasure of knowing such boys," said Charles, with well assumed composure.

The children could not help laughing. "But," Ernest added, "now Charles, do not be tiresome, do not interrupt mamma any more; go on, mamma, who were Neff's scholars?"

"All the neighbourhood," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for both young and old stood in need of tuition, and Neff conceived the bold scheme of forming at once a school for the children, and a home where young men and women could be trained for becoming, themselves, future school-masters and mistresses. Before, however, this scheme could be brought to bear, it was necessary to provide some dwelling place; Neff having at present taught in a wretched stable, where his labours were extremely interrupted, and the attention of the children considerably disturbed, by the constant warfare which was carried on against the kids and fowls. You may judge for yourselves, how much you would have been able to attend to your lessons, if a chicken had been constantly hopping on to your shoulders, or a goat browsing upon your copy book."

"I had rather it should have eaten up the Latin grammar, whilst it was about it," said Charles.

"Had Neff," continued Mrs. Grenville, "at once proposed to build a school-house, he would very likely have been met with ridicule and opposition; but when the people saw how much they had already benefited by following his counsels, they were very naturally inclined to listen to him again; and at length agreed to give him their cordial co-operation, by each family sending one of

their most active members as a volunteer to work under Neff's immediate orders. Animated as usual by their pastor's indefatigable zeal, in a less time than even he had thought possible, a neat and convenient little school-house was finished and ready for the reception of his scholars. This accomplished, Neff next turned his attention to what seemed to him the most important point of all, the organisation of a body of young men and women to carry on the work, should he be taken away from them. In many of the neighbouring villages to Dormilleuse, many young men were in the habit of leaving their own homes during the inclement winter months, when there was nothing for them to do amidst the ice and snow by which they were surrounded, and settling themselves in the more southern hamlets, spent their time in teaching the children of these villages. But being themselves very ignorant, of course this instruction amounted to very little. Now Neff was quite aware, that if he hoped to effect any permanent good, he must begin by teaching the masters themselves. He therefore proposed that during the next five winter months, these young men should come and establish themselves at Dormilleuse with him, when he would himself instruct them. One difficulty he had foreseen and provided against. These young men looked to the scanty pittance

which they received, as school-masters, for their support during the winter months; therefore, if they adopted Neff's plan, they would be deprived of even this scanty maintenance."

"O mamma!" exclaimed Ernest, "I wish we had known of it. I mean, I wish you and papa had. You would have helped them, would you not?"

"Gladly," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But, fortunately, there were others equally willing, and more able. Neff having made known his difficulty to some of his friends in Geneva, they most gladly subscribed for the small amount for which he asked. Neff then made known his plan to the villagers. He had thought, perhaps, about twelve young men might be willing to fall into his plans. What was his delight, to find that he had at once twenty-four eager candidates. But now a fresh difficulty arose. How could he teach so large a number, and yet fulfil the numberless other duties which fell to his share?"

"How much more Neff did than we do!" said Arthur. "I should like to be able to do as much good as Neff did, some day, mamma. Do you think I shall ever be strong again?"

"I trust so, my darling," replied Mrs. Grenville.

"But if God should will it otherwise, you must find your work in patient submission; and remember—

"'They also serve who only stand and wait.'"

"But what did Neff do, mamma?" asked Ernest. "Could he not get some one to help him?"

"Yours would have been a most easy suggestion in England," replied Mrs. Grenville. "It was not quite so practicable in an almost inaccessible region of the high Alps. Fortunately, however, God heard his earnest prayer, and sent to his assistance a man after his own heart, named Ferdinand Martin, who, cheerfully relinquishing his own immediate prospects of worldly success, left Mens as soon as he heard of Neff's plans and perplexities, and hastened to give him every assistance in his benevolent schemes. The two lost no time in fixing their future line of operations. They arranged their little college, dividing the time for study into three portions: the first, from sunrise till eleven o'clock, when they had breakfast."

"O dear, I hope the sun did not rise very early," exclaimed Charles; "or I should have wanted my breakfast long before then."

"I thought a little friend of mine declined all acquaintance with certain idle monkeys already alluded to," said Mrs. Grenville.

"But not with hungry ones, aunt," replied Charles, laughing.

"Well, I agree with you," continued Mrs. Grenville, "it was rather too late to wait for breakfast. After the meal they rested for an hour, and then worked on again from twelve to sunset, which would be quite early in the afternoon during the winter season. At sunset they took their principal meal, a sort of dinner-supper, and then they went again to their books till ten or eleven at night."

"O dear," said Charles, "I should very soon have been tired of such a life."

"But if it was hard for the pupils," said Arthur; "how very hard it must have been for Neff himself, with so many other duties to attend to."

"It must, indeed," replied Mrs. Grenville. "But his anxiety to promote God's glory, and to benefit his fellow creatures, made him quite insensible to fatigue. Although, alas! it was all the time telling most fatally on his constitution. Wherever he was needed, there he was sure to be found, and objects were never wanting for his untiring benevolence. Martin assisted him most successfully. It was wonderful what these two active men accomplished in the short space of five months; and when the time came for the school to disperse, the regret

both of the scholars and the people of Dormilleuse was quite reciprocal; and this was the more to their praise, as many of these poor people had given gratuitous shelter to such of Neff's pupils as came from distant valleys."

"But then what was the good of the subscription, mamma?" asked Ernest.

"It was to provide for their books and maps, and things of that sort," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and also for their food, which, though it consisted chiefly of coarse black bread and salt meat, yet, of course, could not be procured without money; although you may judge how little was expended, when I tell you that twenty-two pounds ten shillings paid for everything."

"O mamma," said Ernest, thoughtfully, "I do not think I ever felt the value of money so much as since you have been telling us about Felix Neff. It has made me so sorry to think how much I have spent on myself, when I see with what a very little he could do so much good."

"It would be well if we could all think of this more frequently," replied Mrs. Grenville. "We should then be more glad of any opportunity which might occur of doing good to others, instead of thinking it a great bore, as I am afraid we too often do, to be asked to give a little even of our own superabundance. If we examined

our actions truly and strictly, I am afraid we should find but few in which we had exercised real self-denial. To return, however, to Neff. At the especial request of the inhabitants of Dormilleuse, a sort of rural festival was given as a farewell to the scholars; and a party of thirty assembled to partake of most unusual luxuries, in the shape of a haunch of chamois, a marmot or two, bear's ham ——"

"O Aunt Helen!" interrupted Charles, "you do not mean that?"

"Indeed I do," replied Mrs. Grenville, smiling at his surprised tone. "And had you been amongst the guests, I dare say you would have enjoyed this delicious fare as much as any one. At any rate, it seemed to give universal satisfaction to those for whom it was intended, and a most happy, merry party they were. Just as they were all separating, some one happened to remark, how pleasant it was to find so many young persons met together, all with such eager desire to do their duty both to God and man; 'but it is sad,' he added, 'to think how improbable it is we shall all ever meet together again.' Neff, who was anxious that no sad thought should rest upon their parting, took advantage of this to point out to them in a few words of earnest and affectionate advice, *that if* they would but follow Christ's example on earth,

their meeting again, though it might be long delayed, was yet as certain as eternity itself. His words were listened to with the deepest attention, and are no doubt still remembered by many, although the voice that uttered them has been long silent in the grave."

"O mamma, did he die very soon?" said Arthur. "And when he was doing so much good to."

"God alone can judge, my love," replied his mother, "of the hour when, our work being ended, it is fit that we shall be called home to our rest. In His wisdom, He saw fit to remove Neff from the sphere where, humanly speaking, his presence seemed so very necessary. However, time had been given him to sow the good seed; the harvest he was not permitted to witness. His long journeys—his constant exposure to cold—his extremely frugal diet—and the irregularity with which, at times, even such slender food as he had was obtained—all combined to ruin his constitution. Had he taken warning in time, it is very probable his life might have been prolonged for some years. But he was so little accustomed to think of himself, and so extremely anxious for the good of those over whom he was placed, that it was not until disease had made considerable progress, that he seemed to be aware even of its existence. At length, however, his fast failing strength roused him to

a conviction of the truth, and he saw the necessity of seeking a milder climate immediately. His parishioners seem, like himself, to have blinded themselves to the truth; and when it at length forced itself upon them, one universal lamentation arose from every side, until poor Neff exclaimed, in the words of St. Paul, 'What mean ye to weep, and to break my heart?' Everything which lay in their power to alleviate his sufferings, these poor mountaineers would gladly have done to keep him amongst them; but he needed what they could not give—perfect rest, soft air, and sunshine. Finding, therefore, that they must part with him, their only anxiety was to shew him their deep respect, and to make his journey towards Geneva as easy for him as possible. They procured a horse for him; and several of the young men accompanied him to see that such simple accommodation as could be got ready was everywhere prepared for him."

"How pleased Neff must have been," said Mary.

"It reminds me," added Ernest, "of the sympathy which was shown to Henry Oberlin. Do not you remember, mamma, when he was returning so very ill from Rothan to Waldbach?"

"Yes, perfectly," replied Mrs. Grenville. "It must have been peculiarly gratifying to Neff, who had always *made* Oberlin a sort of model to himself; and it must

have pleased him to find how completely he too had made himself master of his people's affections: in fact, sad though it was, his journey was all along a sort of triumphant progress. Wherever he stopped, the villagers came from far and near to hear him speak, though only a few words of advice, and to receive his parting blessing."

"How they must have missed him!" said Arthur.

"They must, indeed," replied Mrs. Grenville. "His religion was of such a practical kind, that every one could see its merits. Once he was told of a very malicious accusation which had been made against him. His only answer was a prayer for him who had wronged him. Another time, a religious book had been very much injured in the hope of annoying him. Without for an instant losing his temper, he pointed out that the indignity had been greater to God than to himself: so that the injury which they had done themselves was far greater than that which they had inflicted upon their pastor. Then, too, in speaking to the people, he was always so kind and earnest, that every one could recall some individual good done to himself. One young man always spoke with gratitude of a conversation which was the means of first making him think seriously of a future state. Neff had been speaking to him about religion,

but the young man paid little attention, till at last Neff said—

"'Well, now if you have anything particular to do to your land, do you wait until others begin to work?'

"'Certainly not,' replied the young man. 'It is nothing to me what others do. I work when it is time to work.'

"'Well, then,' replied Neff, 'can you not do for your soul what you would do for your field? Work whilst it is time to work; follow not the multitude to do evil.'"

"Did Neff reach Geneva in safety?" asked Mary.

"Yes; he bore his journey almost better than had been expected," replied Mrs. Grenville: "and the balmy soft air so much restored his strength, that the most sanguine hopes were entertained of his recovery. Neff, however, was not himself deceived; he felt that his life's strength was ebbing fast, and his only prayer was, that, whether in life or in death, he might glorify God. His prayer was fully answered. His illness assumed so distressing a form, that for months he became a lingering example of patience and submission. At last, his body was so enfeebled that he could not digest food of any kind; a little milk and citron juice was all that he could take, although he suffered severely from exhaustion caused by want of a more nourishing diet. The only way in

which this pain was relieved was by gentle rubbing; and sometimes he would say with a smile to any one that was attending him—'Will you come and give me my dinner?'"

"O how patient," said Arthur, with a sigh.

"He was not only patient," replied Mrs. Grenville, "but he was quite cheerful and as self-denying as ever. Some friends sent him a sum of money, hoping he would expend it on any little comforts he might need. 'Ah!' he said, 'this money was intended for the pastor of the high Alps;' and he immediately forwarded it to M. Blanc, who had taken his place, entreating him to use it for the good of his people."

"He was indeed a Christian," said Ernest.

"And as a Christian he met death," replied Mrs. Grenville. "One morning he saw a manifest change in his appearance, but the sight had no terror for his calm and prepared spirit. He merely said, with a tranquil smile—'O soon, very soon, I shall be with God.' He then collected what little things he wished to leave as presents, writing on each, 'Felix Neff—from his death-bed.' This exertion was almost too much for him. His strength hourly decreased, and his sufferings from weakness were terrible, but still no murmur ever passed his lips. When too feeble to speak, he endeavoured to express his thank-

fulness by fixing his eyes on those who stood round his bed with an expression of unutterable tenderness. Hour after hour passed by in this sad struggle between life and death, until at length the silver cord was loosed, and the unfettered spirit was free at the right hand of God."

"Mamma," exclaimed Ernest after an instant's pause, "I do hope some one carried out his plans after his death. It would be so sad to think that all that he had done was lost."

"It would, indeed," replied Mrs. Grenville; "but I most firmly believe that such is never the case. A life dedicated to the service of God is never thrown away. We may not be permitted to see the result of our labour, but sooner or later the good seed will spring up and bear fruit. In Neff's case, this truth was most abundantly verified; not only did he leave behind him many whom he himself had trained, and who were animated with at least some portion of his ardent desire to do right, but his idea of the school at Dormilleuse proved an unspeakable benefit to the whole Vaudois community, as it originated the idea of a college, to be formed for the especial training of future pastors and teachers. This college, which was built in the valley of La Torre in 1830, principally through the exertions of Dr. Gilly and Colonel Beckwith, has prospered so greatly as to justify the erec-

tion of another in the valley of San Martino; and now above a hundred schools in connection with the two have either been built or enlarged in different parts of the valleys."

"What a pity, mamma," said Arthur, "that Neff did not live to see this. How pleased he would have been."

"He would, indeed, my love," replied Mrs. Grenville. "If the good, however, are permitted to know each other in a future state, doubtless he now sees many who arise and call him blessed. But even if this were not so, we need wish him no more perfect recompense than the happiness of heaven."

"I knew that, mamma," said Arthur; "but it is pleasant to see the success of our plans on earth."

"But that is purely a self-gratification, you must remember, my love," replied Mrs. Grenville. "Even on earth, the more our actions are prompted by higher motives, by the pure love of God, and the simple desire to do right for the right's sake, the less shall we be dependant for our happiness on the success of our schemes, or the sympathy and approbation of our fellow-creatures. We shall be satisfied to have done our duty; this will bring its own reward. If such can be in any way our feeling on earth, how much more will it be so in heaven, where earthly affections will be so spiritualized as to lose

all taint of evil, and where love of self will be merged in adoration of the Deity. But this is taking high ground, and is, perhaps, rather above your comprehension."

"No, mamma, I think I understand you," said Arthur; "and I know what you say is right, but it is so very difficult. I am sure I could not go on doing what was right, if I did not think you would know it and be pleased with me."

"It is most natural, my love," replied his mother; "in fact, as long as you are a child it can hardly be otherwise. "If, however, you continue to take as much pains to do right as you have always hitherto done, the day will come, my dear boy, when you will feel and understand the truth of what I have just been saying."

"But, mamma," said Ernest, "are not the valleys now in a much more prosperous state than they have ever been?"

"They ought to be," replied Mrs. Grenville; "for not only have they their churches, their schools, and their ministers; but Charles Albert, the late King of Sardinia, voluntarily gave them a fresh constitution, by which they were emancipated from many of the restraints which had hitherto pressed most heavily upon them, and secured to them many important privileges."

"I hope it will not be a take in, like all the promises *made* to them before," said Ernest.

"I should hope that that could not be the case now," replied Mrs. Grenville; "at any rate, Charles Albert gave a proof of his sincerity, when in 1844 he paid a visit to the valley of La Torre, for the sake of being present at the dedication of a church. Hearing that the people were alarmed at the preparations which were being made for the reception of the troops who were to be his escort, he immediately gave orders that no soldiers should accompany him, saying, 'I need no guard among the Vaudois.'"

"O mamma, that was charming!" exclaimed Ernest.

"The Vaudois were as pleased as you," replied Mrs. Grenville; "and testified by every demonstration of affection and respect, their delight at the confidence which was reposed in them. Charles Albert was so pleased with his visit, that he gave orders, on leaving the valleys, that an elegant fountain should be erected at the gate of La Torre, and that his gift should be inscribed as presented by him in memory of the affectionate reception he had met with from his people. Poor Charles Albert! none held him in greater esteem than did his Vaudois subjects, none more sincerely lamented his abdication and his death."

"I do not think I know much about Charles Albert," said Ernest.

"You must read about him for yourself," replied

Mrs. Grenville. "I have only time to add, that many excellent men are endeavouring to carry on the good work which Neff commenced. May God's blessing be with them, and may the Vaudois population, who now bear witness to the name of Jesus in the calm tranquillity of their Alpine homes, be found at the day of judgment worthy to take rank amongst those noble mountaineers of old, who counted not their lives dear unto themselves, but cheerfully endured persecutions, torments and death, so that they might bear witness to the pure and simple faith of the Gospel of Christ.

"Nor must we forget how much we owe them. When England was fast bound by the fetters of ignorance and superstition, the Vaudois were manfully fighting the good fight of faith; it was they who were then keeping alive the light which now burns so brightly in our own beloved land. This thought should keep us humble, whilst it stimulates us to greater and more noble deeds. As a nation, we are too apt to look down from our supposed pinnacle of perfection, upon those who differ from, or whom we think in any way inferior to ourselves. We have, indeed, been raised very high. Innumerable have been the advantages and the blessings vouchsafed to us: most thankfully should we acknowledge them, only let *us take* care not to imagine that we owe these mercie

to any inherent merit of our own; let us rather strive to improve them to the glory of God, lest we should find at the last great day of account, that many a pure and simple-minded, though perhaps ignorant, Vaudois peasant, may attain to the kingdom of heaven, whilst no place may be found for those who have enjoyed such far higher advantages—and yet enjoyed them all in vain.

To the Vaudois we do, indeed, owe a deep debt of gratitude for their undying constancy, their truthful preservation of the faith. Let us repay the debt by cheerfully ministering to their wants whenever the opportunity shall be offered to us; so that whilst we acknowledge that on earth we have one faith, one Saviour, we may find to our great joy throughout eternity, that we have one rest, one home."